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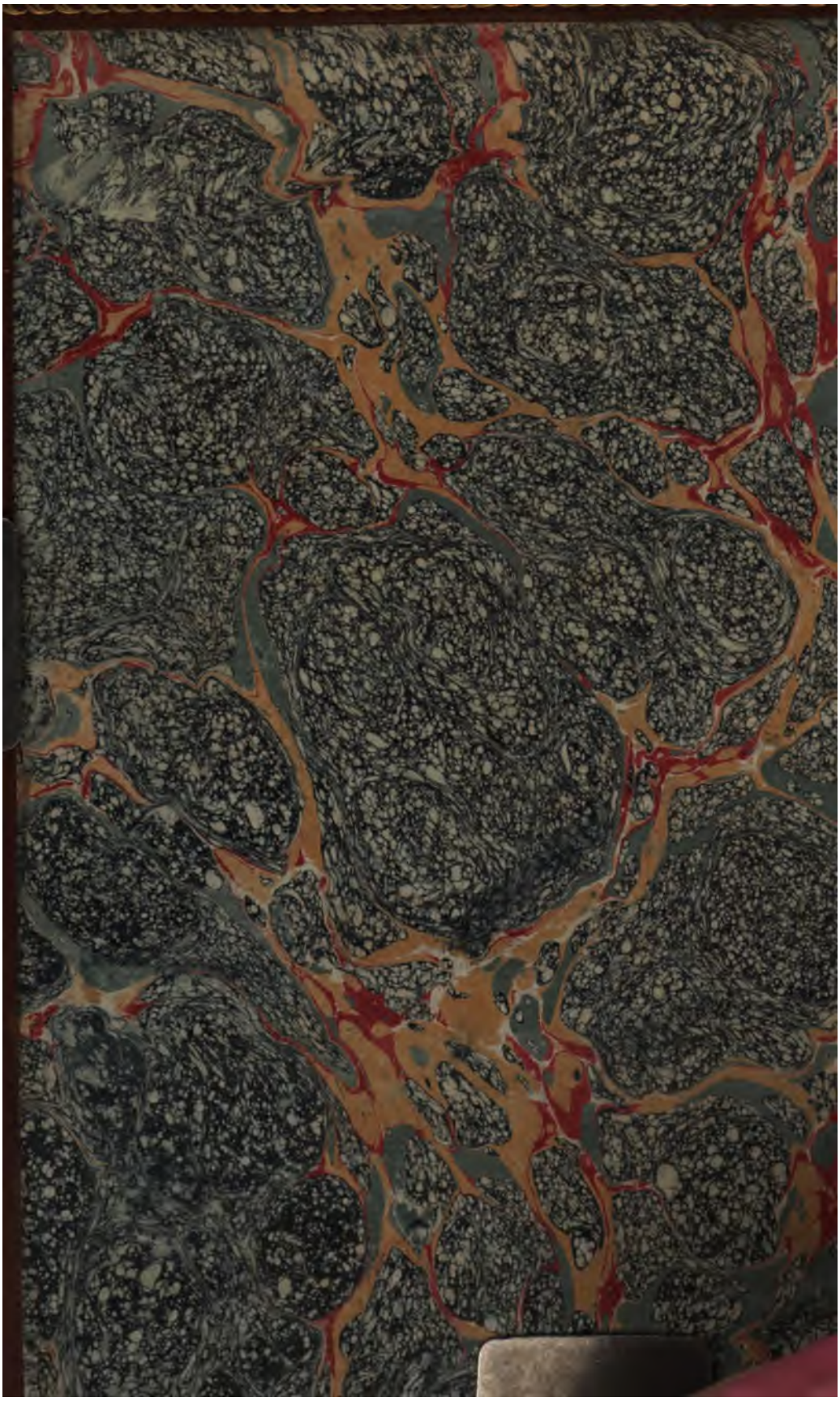

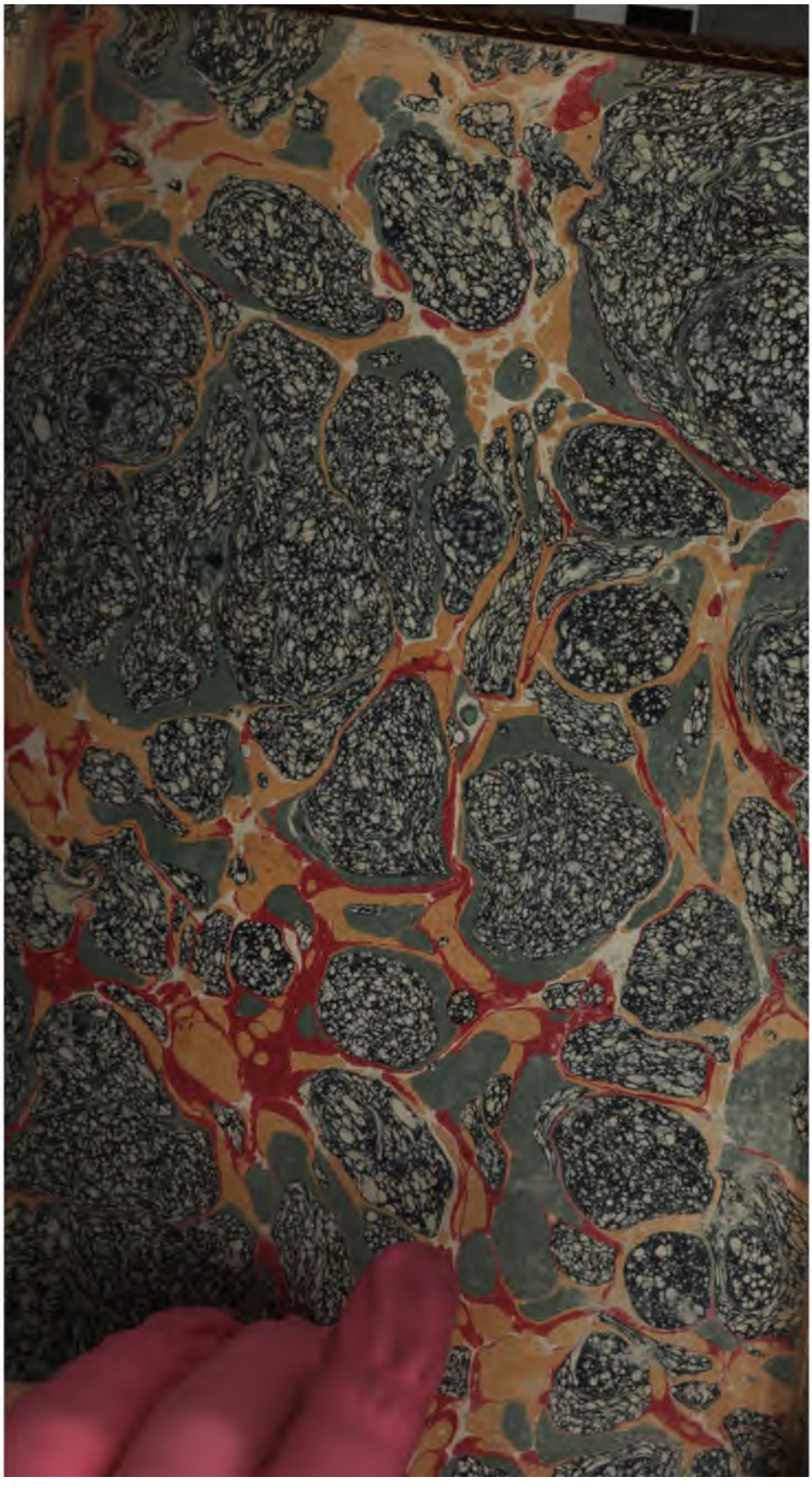

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THE

BRITISH DRAMA.

THE

BRITISH DRAMA;

COMPREHENDING

THE BEST PLAYS

IN

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

OPERAS AND FARCES.

LONDON,

PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM MILLER, OLD BOND-STREET.

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1804.

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PREFACE

OF

THE EDITOR.

It is not easy, at the present day, to determine, whether the ancients were acquainted with that species of dramatic writing, which we call Farce. By some the Satiric Drama of antiquity is considered as corresponding to this style; while others are of opinion, that the Middle Comedy of the Greeks, is the true original of the English Farce.

Instead of entering into a learned and tedious discussion of this question, it will be sufficient at present to observe, that Farce cannot be deemed an exact and legitimate species of the Drama. It delights in exaggeration; and, in every portrait, it enlarges the features of the individual beyond their true proportion: so that, instead of real character, it exhibits to the view of the beholder an overcharged caricature. Its object is not so much to promote morality, as mirth; and, while Comedy aims, by a series of agreeable incidents, to inculcate a precept, the only end of Farce is to excite a laugh. Nor is this a matter of so small importance as might at first be imagined. For Sterne (see the Dedication to Mr Pitt in Tristram Shandy) has observed, "that "every time a man smiles, but much more so when he laughs, it adds some-"thing to this fragment of life." If this doctrine be true, the contents of this volume will certainly contribute something towards the longevity of the age.

From this description it will be obvious how much the writers of Farce must be indebted to the scenic art, for the full effect and success of their pieces. Tragedy is able to support itself by the elevation of its language and the dignity of its sentiments. The well-drawn characters, and delicate strokes of

wit, which adorn the pages of legitimate comedy, will delight almost as much in the closet, as on the stage. But Farce, which is in itself a species of broad grimace, requires all the mimickry of an actor, to set it off to just advantage. Tragedy may be considered as a pathetic invocation to our passions; Comedy as an easy and sportive appeal to our reason; but Farce addresses itself to the risible faculties only, and stands in need of all the tricks and gestures of an actor, to enliven the character represented, and exhibit those peculiarities of humour, which no language can describe, and which none but the most vivid imagination is capable of conceiving.

It is an obvious deduction from these observations, that, if Farce existed at all in elder times, it could not have been accompanied with those charms and attributes, that make it so universal a favourite at present; for the ancients were lamentably deficient in the histrionic art: and the mask, which was universally worn by performers in those times, is alone sufficient to evince, that the science of just representation was then but little understood. A comic piece, in a Greek or a Roman theatre, must have resembled the exhibition of Punch at Bartholomew-fair more than the exquisite performance of "Nature's "laughing children" on the boards of Drury-Lane or Covent-Garden. For, although the mask might give a just representation of features for a single moment, it could not mark those successive changes of expression, which constitute the charm of just acting. It robs us of the eloquent eye and the genuine melody of voice. The stare of surprise, the sudden flashes of anger, the pallid hue and tremulous accent of fear, are all lost under the monotonous uniformity of a mask. The actor, who comes on the stage laughing, must continue to laugh, when he has no longer any share in the joke. Though cudgelled by his master, and scolded by his wife, he must grin on to the end of the scene.

The multitude and excellence of our farces, then, may perhaps be in a great measure attributed to the better construction of modern theatres, and to the judicious rejection of the mask: Nor will it be venturing too bold an assertion to affirm, that Garrick would never have acted, nor Foote have written, had they lived under the old theatrical regime. The discipline of the stage has a decided influence upon the productions of the closet: and mimic excellence has often excited into a flame the dormant spark of dramatic genius. It is related, that Moliere, when young, accompanied by his father, went to the theatre at Paris, while he was yet undecided in the choice of a profession, and that

the performance of the evening made such a sensible impression on his mind, as to determine his inclination in favour of the Drama. And perhaps our own darling Shakespeare would have been known to us only as a sonnetteer, if the genius of Britain had not placed him within the sphere of a theatre, and exposed the unfolded germ of his mighty mind to the vivifying influence of scenic splendour. It is to be presumed, that the same cause, which animated these great masters, imparted a ray of inspiration to the humble professors of the sock. Opportunity may be called the stepmother of genius; and the theatre, by affording a ready and advantageous display to the productions of dramatic talent, has encouraged the race of dramatic authors; as the royal academical exhibition has certainly multiplied the number, and probably increased the energies, of British artists.—With regard to farces in particular, as it is their object to exhibit the drollery of character and laughable scenes of common life, they may be compared to the humorous pictures of a Teniers, or a Smirke: and it must be confessed, that the British theatre is the first school in the world for this species of painting. It is to the excellence of modern performers, to the lavish decorations of the theatre, and to the improved art of stage effect, that Farce acknowledges the highest obligations. Tragedy and Comedy may find in the theatric band a powerful auxiliary; but Farce must be allowed to owe almost its existence to it.

It remains only for the Editor to repeat what he has said in the former volumes, as to the plan of this work. The collections of this kind have hitherto been without any arrangement; but as Tragedy, Comedy, and Farce, possess each a distinction of character, he flattered himself, that a separate and systematic arrangement would be acceptable to the lovers of the Drama. Such a plan exhibits, at one view, the full force of a nation's genius in each respective line; and, while each of these volumes may be had separately, according to the taste of the individual, the whole work may be considered as the full and undivided essence of the BRITISH DRAMA.

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THE

BRITISH DRAMA.

THE CHEATS OF SCAPIN.

BY

OTWAY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

THRIFTY, *an old miser, and father to* OCTAVIAN.
GRIPE, *father to* LEANDER.
LEANDER, *son to* GRIPE, *and privately married to* LUCIA.
OCTAVIAN, *son to* THRIFTY, *and privately married to* CLARA.
SCAPIN.
SHIFT, *servant to* OCTAVIAN.
SLY, *servant to* LEANDER.

WOMEN.

LUCIA, *in love with* LEANDER.
CLARA, *in love with* OCTAVIAN.

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter OCTAVIAN *and* SHIFT.

Oct. THIS is unhappy news! I did not expect my father in two months, and yet you say he is returned already.

Shift. 'Tis but too true.

Oct. That he arrived this morning?

Shift. This very morning.

Oct. And that he is come with a resolution to marry me?

Shift. Yes, sir, to marry you.

Oct. I am ruined and undone! prithee advise me.

Shift. Advise you?

Oct. Yes, advise me. Thou art as surly, as if thou really couldst do me no good. Speak! Has necessity taught thee no wit? Hast thou no shift?

Shift. Lord, sir, I am at present very busy in contriving some trick to save myself! I am first prudent, and then good-natured.

Oct. How will my father rage and storm, when he understands what things have happened in his absence! I dread his anger and reproaches.

Shift. Reproaches! Would I could be quit of him so easy; methinks I feel him already on my shoulders.

Oct. Disinheriting is the least I can expect.

Shift. You should have thought of this before, and not have fallen in love with I know not whom, one that you met by chance in the Dover-coach: She is, indeed, a good snug lass; but God knows what she is besides; perhaps some—

Oct. Villain!

Shift. I have done, sir, I have done.

Oct. I have no friend that can appease my father's anger, and now I shall be betrayed to want and misery.

Shift. For my part, I know but one remedy in our misfortunes.

Oct. Prithee, what is it?

Shift. You know that rogue and arch-cheat Scapin?

Oct. Well; what of him?

Shift. There is not a more subtle fellow breathing: so cunning, he can cheat one newly cheated: 'tis such a wheedling rogue, I'd undertake, in two hours he shall make your father forgive you all; nay, allow you money for your necessary debauches. I saw him, in three days, make an old cautious lawyer turn chemist and projector!

Oct. He is the fittest person in the world for my business; the impudent varlet can do any thing with the peevish old man. Prithee, go look him out; we'll set him a-work immediately.

Shift. See where he comes—Monsieur Scapin!

Enter SCAPIN.

Sca. Worthy sir!

Shift. I have been giving my master a brief account of thy most noble qualities: I told him thou wert as valiant as a ridden cuckold, sincere as whores, honest as pimps in want.'

Sca. Alas, sir, I but copy you: 'Tis you are brave; you scorn the gibbets, halters, and prisons which threaten you, and valiantly proceed in cheats and robberies.

Oct. Oh, Scapin! I am utterly ruined without thy assistance.

Sca. Why, what's the matter, good Mr Octavian?

Oct. My father is this day arrived at Dover with old Mr Gripe, with a resolution to marry me.

Sca. Very well.

Oct. Thou knowest I am already married: How will my father resent my disobedience? I am for ever lost, unless thou can'st find some means to reconcile me to him.

Sca. Does your father know of your marriage?

Oct. I am afraid he is by this time acquainted with it.

Sca. No matter, no matter; all shall be well. I am public spirited; I love to help distressed young gentlemen: and, thank Heaven, I have had good success enough.

Oct. Besides, my present want must be considered; I am in rebellion without money.

Sca. I have tricks and shifts, too, to get that: I can cheat upon occasion; but cheating is now grown an ill-trade: yet, Heaven be thanked, there were never more cullies and fools; but the greatest rooks and cheats, allowed by public authority, ruin such little undertraders as I am.

Oct. Well, get thee straight about thy business. Canst thou make no use of my rogue here?

Sca. Yes, I shall want his assistance; the knave has cunning, and may be useful.

Shift. Ay, sir; but, like other wise men, I am not over-valiant. Pray, leave me out of this business: My fears will betray you; you shall execute, I'll sit at home and advise.

Sca. I stand not in need of thy courage, but thy impudence; and thou hast enough of that. Come, come, thou shalt along: What, man, stand out for a beating? That's the worst can happen.

Shift. Well, well.

Enter CLARA.

Oct. Here comes my dearest Clara.

Clara. Ah, me, Octavian! I hear sad news—They say your father is returned.

Oct. Alas! 'tis true, and I am the most unfortunate person in the world; but 'tis not my own misery that I consider, but yours. How can you bear those wants to which we must be both reduced?

Clara. Love shall teach me—that can make all things easy to us; which is a sign it is the chiefest good. But I have other cares. Will you be ever constant? Shall not your father's severity constrain you to be false?

Oct. Never, my dearest, never!

Clara. They, that love much, may be allowed some fears.

Sca. Come, come; we have now no time to hear you speak fine tender things to one another. Pray, do you prepare to encounter with your father.

Oct. I tremble at the thoughts of it.

Sca. You must appear resolute at first: Tell him you can live without troubling him; threaten him to turn soldier: or, what will frighten him worse, say you'll turn poet. Come, I'll warrant you we bring him to composition.

Oct. What would I give 'twere over!

Sca. Let us practise a little what you are to do. Suppose me your father, very grave, and very angry.

Oct. Well.

Sca. Do you look very carelessly, like a small courtier upon his country acquaintance: A little more surlily: Very well.——Now, I am full of my fatherly authority.—Octavian, thou makest me weep to see thee; but, alas! they are not tears of joy, but tears of sorrow. Did ever so good a father beget so lewd a son? Nay, but for that I think thy mother virtuous, I should pro-

nounce thou art not mine! Newgate-bird, rogue, villain! what a trick hast thou played me in my absence? Married! Yes. But to whom? Nay, that thou knowest not. I'll warrant you some waiting-woman, corrupted in a civil family, and reduced to one of the play-houses; removed from thence by some keeping coxcomb, or———

Clara. Hold, Scapin, hold———

Sca. No offence, lady, I speak but another's words.—Thou abominable rascal, thou shalt not have a groat, not a groat! Besides, I will break all thy bones ten times over! Get thee out of my house!——Why, sir, you reply not a word, but stand as bashfully as a girl that is examined by a bawdy judge about a rape!

Oct. Look, yonder comes my father!

Sca. Stay, Shift; and get you two gone: Let me alone to manage the old fellow.

[*Exeunt* OCT. *and* CLARA.

Enter THRIFTY.

Thrifty. Was there ever such a rash action?

Sca. He has been informed of the business, and is now so full of it, that he vents it to himself.

Thrifty. I would fain hear what they can say for themselves.

Sca. We are not unprovided. [*At a distance.*

Thrifty. Will they be so impudent to deny the thing?

Sca. We never intend it.

Thrifty. Or will they endeavour to excuse it?

Sca. That, perhaps, we may do.

Thrifty. But all shall be in vain.

Sca. We'll try that.

Thrifty. I know how to lay that rogue my son fast.

Sca. That we must prevent.

Thrifty. And for the tatterdemallion, Shift, I'll thresh him to death; I will be three years a cudgelling him!

Shift. I wondered he had forgot me so long.

Thrifty. Oh, ho! Yonder the rascal is, that brave governor! he tutored my son finely!

Sca. Sir, I am overjoyed at your safe return.

Thrifty. Good-morrow, Scapin.——Indeed you have followed my instructions very exactly; my son has behaved himself very prudently in my absence—has he not, rascal, has he not?

[*To* SHIFT.

Sca. I hope you are very well.

Thrifty. Very well—Thou say'st not a word, varlet; thou say'st not a word!

Sca. Had you a good voyage, Mr Thrifty?

Thrifty. Lord, sir! a very good voyage—Pray, give a man a little leave to vent his choler!

Sca. Would you be in choler, sir?

Thrifty. Ay, sir, I would be in choler.

Sca. Pray, with whom?

Thrifty. With that confounded rogue there!

Sca. Upon what reason?

Thrifty. Upon what reason! Hast thou not heard what hath happened in my absence?

Sca. I heard a little idle story.

Thrifty. A little idle story, quotha! why, man, my son's undone; my son's undone!

Sca. Come, come, things have not been well carried; but I would advise you to make no more of it.

Thrifty. I'm not of your opinion; I'll make the whole town ring of it!

Sca. Lord, sir, I have stormed about this business as much as you can do for your heart! but what are we both the better? I told him, indeed, Mr Octavian, you do not do well to wrong so good a father: I preached him three or four times asleep; but all would not do; till, at last, when I had well examined the business, I found you had not so much wrong done you as you imagine.

Thrifty. How! not wrong done me, to have my son married, without my consent, to a beggar?

Sca. Alas! he was ordained to it.

Thrifty. That's fine, indeed! we shall steal, cheat, murder, and so be hanged—then say, we were ordained to it!

Sca. Truly, I did not think you so subtle a philosopher! I mean, he was fatally engaged in this affair.

Thrifty. Why did he engage himself?

Sca. Very true, indeed, very true; but fye upon you, now! would you have him as wise as yourself? Young men will have their follies——witness my charge, Leander, who has gone and thrown away himself at a stranger rate than your son. I would fain know, if you were not once young yourself. Yes, I warrant you, and had your frailties.

Thrifty. Yes; but they never cost me any thing: A man may be as frail and as wicked as he please, if it cost him nothing.

Sca. Alas! he was so in love with the young wench, that if he had not had her, he must have certainly hanged himself.

Shift. Must! why, he had already done it, but that I came very seasonably, and cut the rope.

Thrifty. Didst thou cut the rope, dog? I'll murder thee for that! thou shouldst have let him hang!

Sca. Besides, her kindred surprised him with her, and forced him to marry her.

Thrifty. Then should he have presently gone, and protested against the violence at a notary's.

Sca. O Lord, sir! he scorned that.

Thrifty. Then might I easily have disannulled the marriage.

Sca. Disannul the marriage?

Thrifty. Yes.

Sca. You shall not break the marriage.

Thrifty. Shall not I break it?

Sca. No.

Thrifty. What! shall not I claim the privilege,

of a father, and have satisfaction for the violence done to my son?

Sca. 'Tis a thing he will never consent to.

Thrifty. He will not consent to!

Sca. No: Would you have him confess he was hectored into any thing, that is, to declare himself a coward? Oh, fy, sir! one that has the honour of being your son, can never do such a thing.

Thrifty. Pish! talk not to me of honour! he shall do it, or be disinherited.

Sca. Who shall disinherit him?

Thrifty. That will I, sir.

Sca. You disinherit him! very good——

Thrifty. How, very good?

Sca. You shall not disinherit him.

Thrifty. Shall not I disinherit him?

Sca. No.

Thrifty. No!

Sca. No.

Thrifty. Sir, you are very merry; I shall not disinherit my son?

Sca No, I tell you.

Thrifty. Pray, who shall hinder me?

Sca. Alas, sir! your own self, sir; your own self.

Thrifty. I myself?

Sca. Yes, sir; for you can never have the heart to do it.

Thrifty. You shall find I can, sir.

Sca. Come, you deceive yourself; fatherly affection must shew itself; it must, it must: Do not I know you were ever tender-hearted?

Thrifty. You're mistaken, sir; you're mistaken! Pish! why do I spend my time in tittle-tattle with this idle fellow?——Hang-dog! go find out my rake-hell [*To* SHIFT.], whilst I go to my brother Gripe, and inform him of my misfortune.

Sca. In the mean time, if I can do you any service——

Thrifty. O! I thank you, sir, I thank you.—— [*Exit* THRIFTY.

Shift. I must confess thou art a brave fellow, and our affairs begin to be in a better posture—but the money, the money——we are abominable poor, and my master has the lean vigilant duns, that torment him more than an old mother does a poor gallant, when she solicits a maintenance for her discarded daughter.

Sca. Your money shall be my next care—Let me see, I want a fellow to———Canst thou not counterfeit a roaring bully of Alsatia?——Stalk—look big—Very well. Follow me; I have ways to disguise thy voice and countenance.

Shift. Pray, take a little care, and lay your plot so that I may not act the bully always: I would not be beaten like a bully.

Sca. We'll share the danger, we'll share the danger. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter THRIFTY *and* GRIPE.

Gripe. SIR, what you tell me concerning your son, hath strangely frustrated our designs.

Thrifty. Sir, trouble not yourself about my son; I have undertaken to remove all obstacles, which is the business I am so vigorously in pursuit of.

Gripe. In troth, sir, I'll tell you what I say to you: The education of children, after the getting of them, ought to be the nearest concern of a father. And had you tutored your son with that care and duty incumbent on you, he never could so slightly have forfeited his.

Thrifty. Sir, to return you a sentence for your sentence: Those that are so quick to censure and condemn the conduct of others, ought first to take care that all be well at home.

Gripe. Why, Mr Thrifty, have you heard any thing concerning my son?

Thrifty. It may be I have; and it may be worse than of my own.

Gripe. What is't, I pray? my son?

Thrifty. Even your own Scapin told it me; and you may hear it from him, or some body else: For my part, I am your friend, and would not willingly be the messenger of ill news to one that I think so to me. Your servant—I must hasten to my council, and advise what's to be done in this case. Good bu'y till I see you again.

[*Exit* THRIFTY.

Gripe. Worse than his son! For my part, I cannot imagine how; for a son to marry impudently without the consent of his father, is as great an offence as can be imagined, I take it—But yonder he comes.

Enter LEANDER.

Lean. Oh, my dear father, how joyful am I to see you safely returned! Welcome, as the blessing, which I am now craving, will be.

Gripe. Not so fast, friend a'mine! soft and fair goes far, sir. You are my son, as I take it.

Lean. What d'ye mean, sir?

Gripe. Stand still, and let me look ye in the face.

Lean. How must I stand, sir?

Gripe. Look upon me with both eyes.

Lean. Well, sir, I do.

Gripe. What's the meaning of this report?

Lean. Report, sir?

Gripe. Yes, report, sir; I speak English, as I take it: What is't that you have done in my absence?

Lean. What is't, sir, which you would have had me done?

Gripe. I do not ask you, what I would have had you done; but, what have you done?

Lean. Who? I, sir? Why, I have done nothing at all, not I sir.

Gripe. Nothing at all?

Lean. No, sir.

Gripe. You have no impudence to speak on.

Lean. Sir, I have the confidence that becomes a man, and my innocence.

Gripe. Very well: but Scapin, d'ye mark me, young man, Scapin has told me some tales of your behaviour.

Lean. Scapin!

Gripe. Oh, have I caught you? That name makes ye blush, does it? 'Tis well you have some grace left.

Lean. Has he said any thing concerning me?

Gripe. That shall be examined anon: In the mean while, get you home, d'ye hear, and stay till my return; but look to't, if thou hast done any thing to dishonour me, never think to come within my doors, or see my face more: but expect to be miserable as thy folly and poverty can make thee. [*Exit* GRIPE.

Lean. Very fine; I am in a hopeful condition. This rascal has betrayed my marriage, and undone me! Now, there is no way left but to turn outlaw, and live by rapine: and, to set my hand in, the first thing shall be, to cut the throat of that perfidious pick-thank dog, that has ruined me.

Enter OCTAVIAN *and* SCAPIN.

Oct. Dear Scapin, how infinitely am I obliged to thee for thy care!

Lean. Yonder he comes: I'm overjoyed to see you, good Mr Dog!

Sca. Sir, your most humble servant; you honour me too far.

Lean. You act an ill fool's part; but I shall teach you.

Sca. Sir?

Oct. Hold! Leander.

Lean. No, Octavian; I'll make him confess the treachery he has committed; yes, varlet, dog! I know the trick you have played me: You thought, perhaps, no body would have told me. But I'll make you confess it, or I'll run my sword into your guts!

Sca. Oh, sir, sir! would you have the heart to do such a thing? Have I done you any injury, sir?

Lean. Yes, rascal! that you have, and I'll make you own it, too, or I'll swinge it out of your already tanned thick hide. [*Beats him.*

Sca. The devil's in't! Lord, sir! what d'ye mean? Nay, good Mr Leander, pray, Mr Leander; 'squire Leander—As I hope to be saved—

Oct. Prithee be quiet: for shame! enough. [*Interposes.*

Sca. Well, sir; I confess, indeed, that——

Lean. What! speak, rogue?

Sca. About two months ago, you may remember, a maid servant died in the house——

Lean. What of all that?

Sca. Nay, sir, if I confess you must not be angry.

Lean. Well, go on.

Sca. 'Twas said, she died for love of me, sir: But let that pass.

Lean. Death! you trifling buffoon.

Sca. About a week after her death, I drest up myself like her ghost, and went into Madam Lucia, your mistress's chamber, where she lay half in, half out of bed, with her woman by her, reading an ungodly play-book.

Lean. And was it your impudence did that?

Sca. They both believed it was a ghost to this hour. But it was myself played the goblin, to frighten her from the scurvy custom of lying awake at those unseasonable hours, hearing filthy plays, when she had never said her prayers.

Lean. I shall remember you for all in time and place: But come to the point, and tell me what thou hast said to my father.

Sca. To your father? I have not so much as seen him since his return, and if you would ask him, he'll tell you so himself.

Lean. Yes, he told me himself, and told me all that thou hast said to him.

Sca. With your good leave, sir, then, he lied; I beg your pardon, I mean he was mistaken.

Enter SLY.

Sly. Oh, sir, I bring you the most unhappy news!

Lean. What's the matter?

Sly. Your mistress, sir, is yonder arrested in an action of 200l. They say 'tis a debt she left unpaid at London, in the haste of her escape hither to Dover; and, if you don't raise money within these two hours to discharge her, she'll be hurried to prison.

Lean. Within these two hours?

Sly. Yes, sir, within these two hours.

Lean. Ah, my poor Scapin! I want thy assistance. [SCAPIN *walks about surlily.*

Sca. Ah, my poor Scapin! Now, I'm your poor Scapin; now you've need of me.

Lean. No more! I pardon thee all that thou hast done, and worse, if thou are guilty of it.

Sca. No, no; never pardon me: run your sword in my guts; you'll do better to murder me.

Lean. For Heaven's sake, think no more upon that; but study now to assist me.

Oct. You must do something for him.

Sca. Yes, to have my bones broken for my pains.

Lean. Would you leave me, Scapin, in this severe extremity?

Sca. To put such an affront upon me as you did!

Lean. I wronged thee, I confess.

Sca. To use me like a scoundrel, a villain, a rascal; to threaten to run your sword in my guts!

Lean. I cry thy mercy with all my heart; and if thou wilt have me throw myself at thy feet, I'll do it.

Oct. Faith, Scapin, you must, you cannot but yield.

Sca. Well, then: But do you mark me, sir? another time, better words and gentler blows.

Lean. Will you promise to mind my business?

Sca. As I see convenient, care shall be taken.

Lean. But the time you know is short.

Sca. Pray, sir, don't be so troublesome: How much money is't you want?

Lean. Two hundred pounds.

Sca. And you?

Oct. As much.

Sca. [*To* LEANDER.] No more to be said; it shall be done: For you the contrivance is laid already; and for your father, though he be covetous to the last degree, yet, thanks be to Heaven, he's but a shallow person; his parts are not extraordinary: Do not take it ill, sir; for you have no resemblance of him, but that you are very like him. Be gone! I see Octavia's father coming; I'll begin with him.

[*Exeunt* OCTAVIAN *and* LEANDER.

Enter THRIFTY.

Here he comes, mumbling and chewing the cud, to prove himself a clean beast.

Thrifty. Oh, audacious boy, to commit so insolent a crime, and plunge himself in such a mischief!

Sca. Sir, your humble servant.

Thrifty. How do you, Scapin?

Sca. What, you are ruminating on your son's rash actions?

Thrifty. Have I not reason to be troubled?

Sca. The life of man is full of troubles, that's the truth on't: But your philosopher is always prepared. I remember an excellent proverb of the ancients, very fit for your case.

Thrifty. What's that?

Sca. Pray, mind it; 'twill do ye a world of good.

Thrifty. What is't, I ask you?

Sca. Why, when the master of a family shall be absent any considerable time from his home or mansion, he ought, rationally, gravely, wisely, and philosophically, to revolve within his mind all the concurrent circumstances, that may, during the interval, conspire to the conjunction of those misfortunes, and troublesome accidents, that may intervene upon the said absence, and the interruption of his economal inspection into the remissness, negligences, frailties, and huge and perilous errors, which his substitutes, servants, or trustees, may be capable of, or liable and obnoxious unto; which may arise from the imperfection and corruptness of ingenerated natures, or the taint and contagion of corrupted education, whereby the fountain-head of man's disposition becomes muddy, and all the streams of his manners and conversation run consequently defiled and impure: These things premised, and fore-considered, arm the said prudent philosophical Pater-Familias, to find his house laid waste, his wife murdered, his daughters deflowered, his sons hanged:

'Cum multis aliis, quæ nunc prescribere longum est.'

And to thank Heaven 'tis no worse, too. D'ye mark, sir?

Thrifty. 'Sdeath! Is all this a proverb?

Sca. Ay, and the best proverb, and the wisest, in the world. Good sir, get it by heart:—— 'Twill do you the greatest good imaginable; and don't trouble yourself: I'll repeat it to you till you have gotten it by heart.

Thrifty. No, I thank you, sir; I'll have none on't.

Sca. Pray do, you'll like it better next time; hear it once more, I say———When the master of a———

Thrifty. Hold, hold; I have better thoughts of my own; I am going to my lawyer; I'll null the marriage.

Sca. Going to law! Are you mad, to venture yourself among lawyers? Do you not see every day how the spunges suck poor clients, and, with a company of foolish nonsensical terms, and knavish tricks, undo the nation? No, you shall take another way.

Thrifty. You have reason, if there were any other way.

Sca. Come, I have found one. The truth is, I have a great compassion for your grief. I cannot, when I see tender fathers afflicted for their son's miscarriages, but have bowels for them; I have much ado to refrain weeping for you.

Thrifty. Truly, my case is sad, very sad.

Sca. So it is. Tears will burst out; I have a great respect for your person.

[*Counterfeits weeping.*

Thrifty. Thank you, with all my heart; in troth we should have a fellow-feeling.

Sca. Ay, so we should; I assure you there is not a person in the world whom I respect more than the noble Mr Thrifty.

Thrifty. Thou art honest, Scapin. Ha' done, ha' done.

Sca. Sir, your most humble servant.

Thrifty. But what is your way?

Sca. Why, in brief, I have been with the brother of her, whom your wicked son has married.

Thrifty. What is he?

Sca. A most outrageous, roaring fellow, with a down hanging look, contracted brow, with a swelled red face, enflamed with brandy; one that frowns, puffs, and looks big at all mankind; roars out oaths, and bellows out curses enough in a day to serve a garrison a week; bred up in blood and rapine; used to slaughter from his youth upwards; one that makes no more conscience of killing a man, than cracking of a louse; he has killed sixteen; four for taking the wall of him; five for looking too big upon him. In short, he is the most dreadful of all the race of bullies.

Thrifty. Heaven! how do I tremble at the description? But what's this to my business?

Sca. Why, he (as most bullies are) is in want, and I have brought him, by threatening him with all the courses of law, all the assistance of your friends, and your great purse, (in which I ventured my life ten times, for so often he drew and run at me) yet, I say, at last I have made him hearken to a composition, and to null the marriage for a sum of money.

Thrifty. Thanks, dear Scapin, but what sum?

Sca. Faith, he was damnably unreasonable at first; and gad, I told him so very roundly.

Thrifty. A pox on him! what did he ask?

Sca. Ask! Hang him! why he asked five hundred pounds.

Thrifty. Ouns and heart, five hundred pounds! five hundred devils take him——and fry and frickasee the dog! does he take me for a madman?

Sca. Why, so I said? and, after much argument, I brought him to this: 'Damme,' says he, 'I am going to the army, and I must have two 'good horses for myself, for fear one shonld die; 'and those will cost at least three score guineas.'

Thrifty. Hang him, rogue! why should he have two horses? But I care not if I give threescore guineas to be rid of this affair.

Sca. Then, says he, 'my pistols, saddle, horse 'cloth, and all, will cost twenty more.'

Thrifty. Why, that's fourscore.

Sca. Well reckoned: 'Faith, this arithmetic is a fine art. Then, I must have one for my boy will cost twenty more.

Thrifty. Oh, the devil! confounded dog! let him go and be damned! I'll give him nothing.

Sca. Sir.

Thrifty. Not a sous, damned rascal! let him turn foot-soldier, and be hanged!

Sca. He has a man besides; would you have him go a-foot?

Thrifty. Ay, and his master, too; I'll have nothing to do with him.

Sca. Well, you are resolved to spend twice as much at Doctor's-Commons, you are; you will stand out for such a sum as this, do.

Thrifty. O, damned, unconscious rascal! well, if it must be so, let him have the other twenty.

Sca. Twenty! why, it comes to forty.

Thrifty. No, I'll have nothing to do in it. Oh, a covetous rogue! I wonder he is not ashamed to be so covetous.

Sca. Why, this is nothing to the charge at Doctor's Commons: and though her brother has no money, she has an uncle able to defend her.

Thrifty. O, eternal rogue! well, I must do it; the devil's in him, I think!

Sca. Then, says he, 'I must carry into France money to buy a mule, to carry———

Thrifty. Let him go to the devil with his mule; I'll appeal to the judges.

Sca. Nay, good sir, think a little.

Thrifty. No, I'll do nothing.

Sca. Sir, sir; but one little mule?

Thrifty. No, not so much as an ass!

Sca. Consider.

Thrifty. I will not consider; I'll go to law.

Sca. I am sure if you go to law, you do not consider the appeals, degrees of jurisdiction, the intricate proceedings, the knaveries, the craving of so many ravenous animals, that will prey upon you! villainous harpies, promoters, tipstaves, and the like; none of which but will puff away the clearest right in the world for a bribe. On the other side, the proctor shall side with your adversary, and sell your cause for ready money: Your advocate shall be gained the same way, and shall not be found when your cause is to be heard. Law is a torment of all torments.

Thrifty. That's true: Why, what does the damned rogue————reckon for his mule?

Sca. Why, for horses, furniture, mule, and to pay some scores that are due to his landlady, he demands, and will have, two hundred pounds.

Thrifty. Come, come, let's go to law.

[THRIFTY *walks up and down in a great heat.*]

Sca. Do but reflect upon——

Thrifty. I'll go to law.

Sca. Do not plunge yourself———

Thrifty. To law, I tell you.

Sca. Why, there's for procuration, presentation, councils, productions, proctors, attendance, and scribbling vast volumes of interrogatories, depositions, and articles, consultations and pleadings of doctors, for the register, substitute, judgments, signings—Expedition fees, besides the vast presents to them and their wives. Hang't! the fellow is out of employment; give him the money, give him it, I say!

Thrifty. What, two hundred pounds!

Sca. Ay, ay; why, you'll gain 150 l. by it, I have summed it up; I say, give it him, i'faith do.

Thrifty. What, two hundred pounds!

Sca. Ay; besides, you ne'er think how they'll rail at you in pleading, tell all your fornications, bastardings, and commutings, in their courts.

Thrifty. I defy them; let them tell of my whoring—'tis the fashion!

Sca. Peace! here's the brother.

Thrifty. O Heaven! what shall I do?

Enter SHIFT, *disguised like a Bully.*

Shift. Damme! where's this confounded dog, this father of Octavian? Null the marriage! By all the honour of my ancestors, I'll chine the villain!

Thrifty. Oh, oh!

[*Hides himself behind* SCAPIN.

Sca. He cares not, sir; he'll not give the two hundred pounds.

Shift. By Heaven! he shall be worm's meat within these two hours!

Sca. Sir, he has courage; he fears you not.

Thrifty. You lie, I have not courage; I do fear him mortally!

Shift. He, he, he! Ounds he! would all his family were in him, I'd cut off root and branch. Dishonour my sister! This in his guts! What fellow's that? ha!

Sca. Not he, sir.

Shift. Nor none of his friends?

Thrifty. No, sir; hang him, I am his mortal enemy!

Shift. Art thou the enemy of that rascal?

Thrifty. Oh! ay, hang him——Oh damned bully! [*Aside.*

Shift. Give me thy hand, old boy; the next sun shall not see the impudent rascal alive.

Sca. He'll muster up all his relations against you.

Thrifty. Do not provoke him, Scapin.

Shift. Would they were all here—ha, ha, ha!

[*He forms every way with his sword.*

Here I had one through the lungs, there another into the heart: Ha! there another into the guts: Ah, rogues! there I was with you—hah! hah!

Sca. Hold, sir; we are none of your enemies.

Shift. No, but I will find the villains out while my blood is up! I will destroy the whole family. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit* SHIFT.

Thrifty. Here, Scapin, I have two hundred guineas about me, take them. No more to be said. Let me never see his face again. Take them, I say. This is the devil!

Sca. Will you not give them him yourself?

Thrifty. No, no! I will never see him more: I shall not recover this these three months! See the business done. I trust in thee, honest Scapin—I must repose somewhere—I am mightily out of order—A plague on all bullies, I say!

[*Exit* THRIFTY.

Sca. So, there's one dispatched; I must now find out Gripe. He's here; how Heaven brings them into my nets, one after another!

Enter GRIPE.

Oh Heaven! unlooked for misfortune—poor Mr Gripe, what wilt thou do?

[*Walks about distractedly.*

Gripe. What's that he says of me?

Sca. Is there nobody can tell me news of Mr Gripe?

Gripe. Who's there? Scapin!

Sca. How I run up and down to find him to no purpose! Oh! sir, is there no way to hear of Mr Gripe?

Gripe. Art thou blind? I have been just under thy nose this hour.

Sca. Sir——

Gripe. What's the matter?

Sca. Oh! Sir, your son—

Gripe. Ha, my son—

Sca. Is fallen into the strangest misfortune in the world!

Gripe. What is it?

Sca. I met him a while ago, disordered for something you had said to him, wherein you very idly made use of my name, and, seeking to divert his melancholy, we went to walk upon the pier: Amongst other things, he took particular notice of a new caper in her full trim. The captain invited us on board, and gave us the handsomest collation I ever met with.

Gripe. Well, and where's the disaster of all this?

Sca. While we were eating, he put to sea; and when we were a good distance from the shore, he discovered himself to be an English renegado, that was entertained in the Dutch service, and sent me off in his long-boat to tell you, that if you don't forthwith send him two hundred pounds, he'll carry away your son prisoner: nay, for aught I know, he'll carry him a slave to Algiers.

Gripe. How, in the devil's name? two hundred pounds!

Sca. Yes, sir; and more than that, he has allowed me but an hour's time; you must advise quickly what course to take, to save an only son!

Gripe. What a devil had he to do a shipboard? —Run quickly, Scapin, and tell the villain, I'll send my lord chief justice's warrant after him.

Sca. O la! his warrant in the open sea! d'ye think pirates are fools?

Gripe. I' th' devil's name, what business had he a shipboard?

Sca. There is an unlucky fate, that often hurries men to mischief, sir.

Gripe. Scapin, thou must now act the part of a faithful servant.

Sca. As how, sir!

Gripe. Thou must go bid the pirate send me my son, and stay as a pledge in his room, till I can raise the money.

Sca. Alas, sir! think you the captain has so little wit as to accept of such a poor rascally fellow as I am, instead of your son?

Gripe. What the devil did he do a shipboard?

Sca. D'ye remember, sir, that you have but an hour's time?

Gripe. Thou sayest he demands——

Sca. Two hundred pounds.

Gripe. Two hundred pounds! Has the fellow no conscience?

Sca. O la! the conscience of a pirate! why, very few lawful captains have any.

Gripe. Has he not reason neither? Does he know what the sum two hundred pounds is?

Sca. Yes, sir; tarpawlins are a sort of people that understand money, though they have no great acquaintance with sense. But, for Heaven's sake, dispatch!

Gripe. Here, take the key of my counting-house.

Sca. So!

Gripe. And open it.

Sca. Very good!

Gripe. In the left-hand window lies the key of my garret; go, take all the clothes that are in the great chest, and sell them to the brokers to redeem my son.

Sca. Sir, you're mad! I shan't get fifty shillings for all that's there, and you know that I am straitened for time.

Gripe. What a devil did he do a shipboard!

Sca. Let shipboard alone, and consider, sir, your son. But Heaven's my witness, I have done for him as much as was possible; and if he be not redeemed, he may thank his father's kindness.

Gripe. Well, sir, I'll go see if I can raise the money—was it not ninescore pounds you spoke of?

Sca. No; two hundred pounds.

Gripe. What, two hundred pounds Dutch, ha?

Sca. No, sir; I mean English money; two hundred pounds sterling.

Gripe. I' th' devil's name, what business had he a shipboard? Confounded shipboard!

Sca. This shipboard sticks in his stomach.

Gripe. Hold, Scapin! I remember I received the very sum just now in gold, but did not think I should have parted with it so soon.

[*He presents* SCAPIN *his purse, but will not let it go; and in his transportments, pulls his arm to and fro, whilst* SCAPIN *reaches at it.*

Sca. Ay, sir.

Gripe. But tell the captain he is the son of a whore!

Sca. Yes, sir.

Gripe. A dogbolt!

Sca. I shall, sir.

Gripe. A thief! a robber! and that he forces me to pay him two hundred pounds contrary to all law or equity!

Sca. Nay, let me alone with him.

Gripe. That I will never forgive him, dead or alive.

Sca. very good.

Gripe. And that if ever I light on him, I'll murder him privately, and feed dogs with him.

[*He puts up his purse, and is going away.*

Sca. Right, sir.

Gripe. Now, make haste, and go and redeem my son

Sca. Ay; but d'ye hear, sir? where's the money?

Gripe. Did I not give it thee?

Sca. Indeed, sir, you made me believe you would, but you forgot, and put it in your pocket again.

Gripe. Ha—my griefs and fears for my son make me do I know not what!

Sca. Ay, sir; I see it does indeed.

Gripe, What a devil did he do a shipboard? damned pirate! damned renegade! all the devils in hell pursue thee! [*Exit.*

Sca. How easily a miser swallows a load, and how difficultly he disgorges a grain! But I'll not leave him so; he's like to pay in other coin, for telling tales of me to his son.

Enter OCTAVIAN *and* LEANDER.

Well, sir, I have succeeded in your business; there's two hundred pounds, which I have squeezed out of your father.

Oct. Triumphant Scapin!

Sca. But for you I can do nothing.

[*To* LEANDER.

Lean. Then may I go hang myself. Friends both, adieu!

Sca. D'ye hear, d'ye hear? the devil has no such necessity for you yet, that you need ride post. With much ado I've got your business done, too.

Lean. Is't possible?

Sca. But on condition that you permit me to revenge myself on your father, for the trick he has served me.

Lean. With all my heart; at thy own discretion, good honest Scapin.

Sca. Hold your hand; there's two hundred pounds.

Lean. My thanks are too many to pay now: Farewell, dear son of Mercury, and be prosperous.

Sca. Gramercy, Pupil. Hence we gather.
Give son the money, hang up father.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter LUCIA *and* CLARA.

Luc. Was ever such a trick played, for us to run away from our governesses, where our careful fathers had placed us, to follow a couple of young gentleman, only because they said they loved us? I think 'twas a very noble enterprize! I am afraid the good fortune we shall get by it, will very hardly recompense the reputation we have lost by it.

Cla. Our greatest satisfaction is, that they are men of fashion and credit; and, for my part, I long ago resolved not to marry any other, nor such an one neither, till I had a perfect confirmation of his love; and 'twas an assurance of Octavian's that brought me hither.

Luc. I must confess, I had no less a sense of the faith and honour of Leander.

Cla. But seems it not wonderful, that the circumstances of our fortune should be so nearly allied, and ourself so much strangers? Besides, if I mistake not, I see something in Leander, so much resembling a brother of mine of the same name, that, did not the time since I saw him make me fearful, I should be often apt to call him so.

Luc. I have a brother too, whose name's Octavian, bred in Italy, and just as my father took his voyage, returned home; not knowing where to find me, I believe is the reason I have not seen him yet. But if I deceive not myself, there is something in your Octavian that extremely refreshes my memory of him.

Cla. I wish we might be so happy as we are inclined to hope; but there's a strange blind side in our natures, which always makes us apt to believe, what we most earnestly desire.

Luc. The worst, at last, is but to be forsaken by our fathers: And, for my part, I had rather lose an old father than a young lover, when I may with reputation keep him, and secure myself against the imposition of fatherly authority.

Cla. How unsufferable is it to be sacrificed to the arms of a nauseous blockhead, that has no other sense than to eat and drink, when 'tis provided for him, rise in the morning, and go to bed at night, and with much ado be persuaded to keep himself clean!

Luc. A thing of mere flesh and blood, and that of the worst sort too, with a squinting meagre hang-dog countenance, that looks as if he always wanted physic for the worms.

Cla. Yet such their silly parents are generally most indulgent to; like apes, never so well pleased as when they are fondling with their ugly issue.

Luc. Twenty to one, but to some such charming creatures our careful fathers had designed us!

Cla. Parents think they do their daughters the greatest kindness in the world, when they get them fools for their husbands; and yet are very apt to take it ill, if they make the right use of them.

Luc. I'd no more be bound to spend my days in marriage to a fool, because I might rule him, than I would always ride an ass, because the creature was gentle.

Cla. See, here's Scapin, as full of designs and affairs, as a callow statesman at a treaty of peace.

Enter SCAPIN.

Sca. Ladies!

Cla. Oh, monsieur Scapin! What's the reason you have been such a stranger of late?

Sca. Faith, ladies, business, business has taken up my time; and truly I love an active life, love my business extremely.

Luc. Methinks though, this should be a difficult place for a man of your excellencies to find employment in.

Sca. Why faith, madam, I'm never shy to my friends: My business is, in short, like that of all other men of business, diligently contriving how to play the knave, and cheat to get an honest livelihood.

Cla. Certainly men of wit and parts need never be driven to indirect courses.

Sca. Oh, madam! wit and honesty, like oil and vinegar, with much ado mingle together, give a relish to a good fortune, and pass well enough for sauce, but are very thin fare of themselves. No, give me your knave, your thorough-paced knave; hang his wit, so he be but rogue enough.

Luc. You're grown very much out of humour with wit, Scapin; I hope yours has done you no prejudice of late?

Sca. No, madam; your men of wit are good for nothing, dull, lazy, restive snails; 'tis your undertaking, impudent, pushing fool, that commands his fortune.

Cla. You are very open and plain in this proceeding, whatever you are in others.

Sca. Dame Fortune, like most others of the female sex (I speak all this with respect to your ladyship), is generally most indulgent to the nimble mettled blockheads; men of wit are not for her turn, ever too thoughtful when they should be active: Why, who believes any man of wit to have so much as courage? No, ladies, if ye've any friends that hope to raise themselves, advise them to be as much fools as they can, and they'll never want patrons: And for honesty, if your ladyship think fit to retire a little further,

you shall see me perform upon a gentleman that's coming this way.

Cla. Prithee, Lucia, let us retreat a little, and take this opportunity of some divertisement, which has been very scarce here hitherto.

Enter SHIFT, *with a Sack.*

Sca. Oh, Shift!

Shif. Speak not too loud; my master's coming.

Sca. I'm glad on't, I shall teach him to betray the secrets of his friend. If any man puts a trick upon me without return, may I lose this nose!

Shift. I wonder at thy valour; thou art continually venturing that body of thine, to the indignity of bruises, and indecent bastinadoes.

Sca. Difficulties in adventures make them pleasant when accomplished.

Shift. But your adventures, how comical soever in the beginning, are sure to be tragical in the end.

Sca. 'Tis no matter; I hate your pusillanimous spirit: revenge and lechery are never so pleasant as when you venture hard for them; begone! Here comes my man. [*Exit* SHIFT.

Enter GRIPE.

Oh, sir, sir, shift for yourself! quickly sir! quickly sir! for Heaven's sake!

Gripe. What's the matter, man?

Sca. Heaven! is this a time to ask questions? Will you be murdered instantly? I am afraid you will be killed within these two minutes!

Gripe. Mercy on me! killed! for what?

Sca. They are every where looking out for you.

Gripe. Who? Who?

Sca. The brother of her whom your son has married; he's a captain of a privateer, who has all sorts of rogues, English, Scotch, Welsh, Irish, French, under his command, and all lying in wait now, or searching for you to kill you, because you would null the marriage: They run up and down, crying, Where is the rogue Gripe? Where is the dog? Where is the slave Gripe? They watch for you so narrowly, that there's no getting home to your house.

Gripe. Oh, Scapin! what shall I do? What will become of me?

Sca. Nay, Heaven knows; but, if you come within their reach, they will *De Wit* you; they will tear you in pieces! Hark!

Gripe. O Lord!

Sca. Hum! 'tis none of them.

Gripe. Canst thou find no way for my escape, dear Scapin?

Sca. I think I have found one.

Gripe. Good Scapin, show thyself a man, now.

Sca. I shall venture being most immoderately beaten.

Gripe. Dear Scapin, do: I will reward thee bounteously: I'll give thee this suit, when I have worn it eight or nine months longer.

Sca. Listen! who are these?

Gripe. God forgive me! Lord have mercy upon us!

Sca. No, there's nobody: Look, if you'll save your life, go into this sack presently.

Gripe. Oh! who's there?

Sca. Nobody: Get into the sack, and stir not, whatever happens: I'll carry you as a bundle of goods, through all your enemies, to the major's house of the castle.

Gripe. An admirable invention! Oh, Lord! quick. [*Gets into the sack.*

Sca. Yes, 'tis an excellent invention, if you knew all. Keep in your head. Oh, here's a rogue coming to look for you!

SCAPIN *counterfeits a Welshman.*

Do you hear, I pray you? where is Leander's father, look you?

In his own voice.

How should I know? What would you have with him?——Lie close. [*Aside to* GRIPE.

Have with him! look you, hur has no creat pus'ness, but her would have satisfactions and reparations, look you, for credit and honours; by St Tavy, he shall not put the injuries and affronts upon my captains, look you now, sir.

He affront the captain! He meddles with no man.

You lye, sir, look you, and hur will give you beatings and chastisements for your contradictions, when hur Welse ploods up, look you, and hur will cudgel your pack and your nootles for it; take you that, pray now.

[Beats the sack.

Hold, hold; will you murder me? I know not where he is, not I.

Hur will teach saucy jacks how they provoke hur Welse ploods and hur collars: and for the old rogue, hur will have his guts and his plood, look you, sir, or hur will never wear leek upon St Tavy's day more, look you.

Oh! He has mawled me! A damned Welsh rascal!

Gripe. You! The blows fell upon my shoulders. Oh!

Sca. 'Twas only the end of the stick fell on you; the main substantial part of the cudgel lighted on me.

Gripe. Why did you not stand further off?

Sca. Peace—Here's another rogue.

In a Lancashire dialect.

Yaw fellee wi' th' sack there, done yaw knaw whear th' awd rascal Griap is?

Not I; but he is no rascal.

Yaw leen, yaw douge; yaw knaw weel enugh whear he is, an yawden tell, and that he is a fow rascot as any in aw the town; I's tell a that by'r lady.

Not I, sir; I know neither, not I.

By th'mess, an ay tack thee in hont, ay's raddle the bones on thee; ay's keeble thee to some tune.

Me, sir? I don't understand you.

Why, thaw'rt his mon, thaw hobble; I'll snite th' naes o' thee.

Hold, hold, sir! what would you have with him?

Why, I mun knock him down with my kibbo, the first bawt to the grawnt, and then I mun beat him to pap, by th' mess, and after ay mun cut off the lugs and naes on 'em, and ay wot, he'll be a pretty swatley fellee, bawt lugs and naes.

Why, truly, sir, I know not where he is; but he went down that lane.

This lone, sayn ye? Ays find him, by'r lady, an he be above grawnt.

So, he's gone; a damned Lancashire rascal!

Gripe. Oh, good Scapin! go on quickly.

[GRIPE *pops in his head.*

Scap. Hold; here's another.

In an Irish tone.

Doest thou hear, Sackman? I prithee whare is that damned dog, Gripe?

Why, what's that to you? What know I?

What's that to me, joy? By my shoul, joy, I will lay a great blow upon thy pate, and the devil take me, but I will make thee know whare he is indeed, or I'll beat upon thee till thou dost know, by my salvation indeed.

I'll not be beaten.

Now, the devil take me, I swear by him that made me, if thou dost not tell whare is Gripe, but I will beat thy father's child very much indeed!

What would you have me do? I cannot tell where he is. But what would you have with him?

What would I have with him? By my shoul, if I do see him, I will make murder upon him for my captain's sake.

Murder him? He'll not be murdered.

If I do lay my eyes upon him, Gad I will put my sword into his bowels, the devil take me indeed. What hast thou in that sack, joy? By my salvation, I will look into it!

But you shall not. What have you to do with it?

By my soul, joy, I will put my rapier into it!

Gripe. Oh! Oh!

What, it does grunt, by my salvation, the devil take me, I will see it indeed.

You shall not see my sack; I'll defend it with my life.

Then I will make beat upon thy body; take that, joy, and that, and that, upon my soul, and so I do take my leave, joy.

[Beats him in the sack.

A plague on him, he's gone; he's almost killed me.

Gripe. I can hold no longer; the blows all fell upon my shoulders!

Sca. You can't tell me; they fell on mine: oh my shoulders!

Gripe. Yours? Oh my shoulders!

Sca. Peace! they're coming.

In a hoarse seaman's voice.

Where is the dog? I'll lay him on fore and aft, swinge him with a cat-o'-nine-tail, keel-haul, and then hang him at the main-yard.

In broken French English.

If dere be no more men in England, I will kill him; I vill put my rapier in his body. I vill give him two tree pushe in de gutte.

Here SCAPIN *acts a number of them together.*

We must go this way—o' the right hand? no, to th' left hand—lie close—search every where—by my salvation, I will kill the damned dog—and we do catch 'em, we'll tear 'em in pieces, and I do hear he went thick way—no, straight forward. Hold, here is his man; where is your master—Damn me, where? In hell? Speak—. Hold, not so furiously—*and you don't tell us where he is, we'll murder thee———*

Do what you will, gentlemen, I know not.

Lay him on thick; thwack him soundly.

Hold, hold; do what you will, I will ne'er betray my master.

Knock 'en down; beat 'en soundly; to 'en, at 'en, at 'en, at———

[*As he is going to strike,* GRIPE *peeps out, and* SCAPIN *takes to his heels.*

Gripe. Oh, dog, traitor, villain! Is this your plot? Would you have murdered me, rogue? Unheard of impudence!

Enter THRIFTY.

Oh, brother Thrifty! You come to see me loaden with disgrace; the villain Scapin has, as I am sensible now, cheated me of 200l. This beating brings all into my memory.

Thrifty. The impudent varlet has gulled me of the same sum.

Gripe. Nor was he content to take my money, but has abused me at that barbarous rate, that I am ashamed to tell it; but he shall pay for it severely.

Thrifty. But this is not all, brother; one misfortune is the forerunner of another: Just now I have received letters from London, that both our daughters have run away from their governesses, with two wild debauched young fellows, that they fell in love with.

Enter LUCIA *and* CLARA.

Luc. Was ever so malicious impudence seen? Ha! Surely, if I mistake not, that should be my father.

Cla. And the other mine, whom Scapin has used thus.

Luc. Bless us! Returned, and we not know of it?

Cla. What will they say to find us here?

Luc. My dearest father, welcome to England.

Thrifty. My daughter Luce?

Luc. The same, sir.

Gripe. My Clara here, too?

Cla. Yes, sir; and happy to see your safe arrival.

Thrifty. What strange destiny has directed this happiness to us?

Enter OCTAVIAN.

Gripe. Hey-day!

Thrifty. Oh, so! I have a wife for you.

Oct. Good father, all your propositions are vain; I must needs be free, and tell you I am engaged.

Thrifty. Look you now: is not this very fine? Now I have a mind to be merry, and to be friends with you, you'll not let me now, will you? I tell you, Mr Gripe's daughter, here—

Oct. I'll never marry Mr Gripe's daughter, sir, as long as I live: No, yonder's she that I must love, and can never entertain the thoughts of any other.

Cla. Yes, Octavian, I have at last met with my father, and all our fears and troubles are at an end.

Thrifty. Lo ye now, you would be wiser than the father that begot you, would you? Did not I always say you should marry Mr Gripe's daughter? But you do not know your sister Luce.

Oct. Unlooked for blessing! Why, she's my friend Leander's wife?

Thrifty. How? Leander's wife!

Gripe. What! My son Leander?

Oct. Yes, sir; your son Leander.

Gripe. Indeed! Well, brother Thrifty, 'tis true the boy was always a good-natured boy.—Well, now I am so overjoyed, that I could laugh till I shook my shoulders, but that I dare not, they are so sore. But look, here he comes.

Enter LEANDER.

Lean. Sir, I beg your pardon; I find my marriage is discovered; nor would I, indeed, have longer concealed it; this is my wife, I must own her.

Gripe. Brother Thrifty, did you ever see the like? did you ever see the like? ha!

Thrifty. Own her, quotha! Why, kiss her, kiss her, man; odsbodikins, when I was a young fellow, and was first married, I did nothing else for three months. O my conscience, I got my boy Oct, there, the first night, before the curtains were quite drawn!

Gripe. Well, 'tis his father's nown child. Just so, brother, was it with me upon my wedding-day; I could not look upon my dear without blushing; but when we were a-bed, Lord ha' mercy upon us!—but I'll no more.

Lean. Is, then, my father reconciled to me?

Gripe. Reconciled to thee! Why, I love thee at my heart, man, at my heart; why, 'tis my brother Thrifty's daughter, Mrs Lucy, whom I always designed for thy wife; and that's thy sister Clara, married to Mr Octa, there.

Lean. Octavian, are we then brothers? There is nothing that I could have rather wished, after compleating of my happiness with my charming Lucia.

Thrifty. Come, sir, hang up your compliments in the hall at home; they are old, and out of fashion. Shift, go to the inn, and bespeak a supper may cost more money than I have got to pay for it, for I am resolved to run in debt to-night.

Shift. I shall obey your commands, sir.

Thrifty. Then, d'ye hear, send out and muster up all the fiddlers, blind or not blind, drunk or sober, in the town; let not so much as the roaster of tunes, with his cracked cymbal in a case, escape you.

Gripe. Well, what would I give now for the fellow that sings the song at my lord mayor's feast: I myself would make an epithalamium by way of sonnet, and he should set a tune to it; it was the prettiest he had last time.

Enter SLY.

Sly. Oh, gentlemen, here is the strangest accident fallen out!

Thrifty. What's the matter?

Sly. Poor Scapin!

Gripe. Ha! Rogue, let him be hanged! I'll hang him myself.

Sly. Oh, sir, that trouble you may spare; for, passing by a place where they were building, a great stone fell upon his head, and broke his skull so, you may see his brains.

Thrifty. Where is he?

Sly. Yonder he comes.

Enter SCAPIN *between two, his head wrapt up in linen, as if he had been wounded.*

Sca. Oh me! Oh me! Gentlemen, you see me, you see me in a sad condition, cut off like a flower in the prime of my years; but yet I could not die, without the pardon of those I have wronged; yes, gentlemen, I beseech you to forgive me all the injuries that I have done; but more especially I beg of you, Mr Thrify, and my good master, Mr Gripe.

Thrifty. For my part, I pardon thee freely; go, and die in peace.

Sca. But 'tis you, sir, I have most offended, by the inhuman bastinadoes which——

Gripe. Prithee, speak no more of it; I forgive thee, too.

Sca. 'Twas a most wicked insolence in me, that I should, with vile crabtree, cudgel——

Gripe. Pish! no more; I say I am satisfied.

Sca. And now so near my death, 'tis an inexpressible grief that I should dare to lift my hand against———

Gripe. Hold thy peace, or die quickly; I tell thee I have forgot all———

Sca. Alas! How good a man you are! But, sir, d'ye pardon me freely, and from the bottom of your heart, those merciless drubs that——

Gripe. Prithee, speak no more of it; I forgive thee freely; here's my hand upon't.

Sca. Oh, sir, how much your goodness revives me!

[*Pulls off his cap.*

Gripe. How's that! Friend, take notice, I pardon thee; but 'tis upon condition, that you are sure to die.

Sca. Oh me! I begin to faint again.

Thrifty. Come, fie, brother! never let revenge employ your thoughts now; forgive him, forgive him without any condition.

Gripe. A deuce on't, brother! as I hope to be saved, he beat me basely and scurvily, never stir he did: but, since you will have it so, I do forgive him.

Thrifty. Now, then, let's to supper, and in our mirth drown and forget all troubles.

Sca. Ay, and let them carry me to the lower end of the table;

Where, in my chair of state, I'll sit at ease,
And eat and drink, that I may die in peace.

[*A dance.*]

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

COUNTRY HOUSE.

BY

VANBRUGH.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Mr Barnard.
Mr Griffard, *brother to* Mr Barnard.
Erastus, *in love with* Mariamne.
Dorant, *son to* Mr Barnard.
Monsieur le Marquis.
Baron de Messy.
Janno, *cousin to* Mr Barnard.
Colin, *servant to* Mr Barnard.
Charly, *a little boy.*
Servant to Erastus.
Three Gentlemen, friends to Dorant.
A Cook, other Servants, &c.

WOMEN.

Mrs Barnard.
Mariamne, *her daughter.*
Mawkin, *sister to* Janno.
Lisetta, *servant to* Mariamne.

Scene—Normandy, in France.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter Erastus *and his man, with* Lisetta, Mariamne's *maid.*

Lis. Once more I tell ye, sir, if you have any consideration in the world for her, you must be gone this minute.

Era. My dear Lisetta, let me but speak to her; let me but see her only!

Lis. You may do what you will; but not here, whilst you are in our house. I do believe she's as impatient to see you, as you can be to see her; but——

Era. But why won't you give us that satisfaction, then?

Lis. Because I know the consequence; for, when you once get together, the devil himself is not able to part ye; you will stay so long till you are surprised, and what will become of us, then?

Ser. Why, then we shall be thrown out at the window, I suppose?

Lis. No; but I shall be turned out of doors.

Era. How unfortunate am I! these doors are open to all the world, and only shut to me.

Lis. Because you come for a wife, and at our house we do not care for people that come for wives.

Ser. What would you have us come for, child?

Lis. Any thing but wives; because they cannot be put off without portions.

Ser. Portions! No, no; never talk of portions; my master nor I don't want portions; and, if

he'd follow my advice, a regiment of fathers should not guard her.

Lis. What say you?

Ser. Why, if you'll contrive that my master may run away with your mistress, I don't much care, faith, if I run away with you.

Lis. Don't you so, rogue's face? But I hope to be better provided for.

Era. Hold your tongues. But where is Mariamne's brother? He is my bosom friend, and would be willing to serve me.

Lis. I told you before, that he has been abroad a hunting, and we have not seen him these three days; he seldom lives at home, to avoid his father's ill humour; so that it is not your mistress only that our old covetous cuff teizes——there's no body in the family but feels the effects of his ill humour——by his good will he would not suffer a creature to come within his doors, or eat at his table——and, if there be but a rabbit extraordinary for dinner, he thinks himself ruined for ever.

Era. Then, I find you pass your time vastly comfortably in this family!

Lis. Not so bad as you imagine, neither, perhaps; for, thank Heaven, we have a mistress that's as bountiful as he is stingy, one that will let him say what he will, and yet does what she will. But hark! here's some body coming: it is certainly he.

Era. Can't you hide us somewhere?

Lis. Here, here, get you in here as fast as you can.

Ser. Thrust me in, too.

[*Puts them into the closet.*

Enter MARIAMNE.

Lis. O! is it you?

Mar. So, Lisetta, where have you been? I've been looking for ye all over the house: Who are those people in the garden with my mother-in-law? I believe my father won't be very well pleased to see them there.

Lis. And here's somebody else not far off, that, I believe, your father won't be very well pleased with, neither. Come, sir, sir! [*Calls.*

[ERASTUS, *and his Servant, come out.*

Mar. O Heavens! [*Cries out.*

Lis. Come, lovers, I can allow you but a short bout on't this time; you must do your work with a jirk——one whisper, two sighs, and a kiss; make haste, I say, and I'll stand centry for ye in the mean time. [*Exit* LIS.

Mar. Do you know what you expose me to, Erastus? What do you mean!

Era. To die, madam! since you receive me with so little pleasure.

Mar. Consider what would become of me, if my father should see you here.

Era. What would you have me do?

Mar. Expect with patience some happy turn of affairs; my mother-in-law is kind and indulgent to a miracle; and her favour, if well managed, may turn to our advantage; and, could I prevail upon myself to declare my passion to her, I don't doubt but she'd join in our interest.

Era. Well, since we've nothing to fear from her, and your brother, you know, is my intimate friend; you may, therefore, conceal me somewhere about the house for a few days. I'll creep into any hole.

Ser. Ay; but who must have the care of bringing us victuals? [*Aside.*

Era. Thrust us into the cellar, or up into the garret: I don't care where it is, so that it be but under the same roof with you.

Ser. But I don't say so, for that jade Lisetta will have the feeding of us, and I know what kind of diet she keeps——I believe we shan't be like the fox in the fable; our bellies won't be so full but we shall be able to creep out at the same hole we got in at.

Era. Must I then be gone? Must I return to Paris?

Enter LISETTA.

Lis. Yes; that you must, and immediately, too, for here's my master coming in upon ye.

Era. What shall I do!

Lis. Begone this minute.

Mar. Stay in the village 'till you hear from me; none of our family know that you are in it.

Era. Shall I see you sometimes?

Mar. I have not time to answer you now.

Lis. Make haste, I say; are you bewitched?

Era. Will you write to me?

Mar. I will if I can.

Lis. Begone, I say; is the devil in you?

[*Thrusting* ERASTUS *and his servant out.*

Come this way, your father's just stepping in upon us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter MR BARNARD *beating* COLIN.

Mr Barn. Rogue! rascal! did not I command you? Did not I give you my orders, sirrah?

Col. Why, you gave me orders to let no body in? and madam, her gives me orders to let every body in——why, the devil himself can't please you boath, I think.

Mr Barn. But, sirrah, you must obey my orders, not hers.

Col. Why, the gentlefolks asked for her; they did not ask for you——what do you make such a noise about?

Mr Barn. For that reason, sirrah, you should not have let them in.

Col. Hold, sir; I'd rather see you angry than her, that's true; for when you're angry, you have only the devil in ye, but when madam's in a passion, she has the devil and his dam both.

Mr Barn. You must mind what I say to you, sirrah, and obey my orders.

Col. Ay, ay, measter; but let's not quarrel

with one another—you're always in such a plaguy humour.

Mr Barn. What are these people that are just come?

Col. Nay, that know not I; but as fine volk they are as ever eye beheld, Heaven bless them!

Mr Barn. Did you hear their names?

Col. Noa, noa; but in a coach they keam all besmeared with gould, with six breave horses, the like on them ne'er did I set eyes on—'twould do a man's heart good to look on sike fine beast, measter.

Mr Barn. How many persons are there?

Col. Vour; two as fine men as ever woman bore, and two as dainty deames as a man would desire to lay his lips to.

Mr Barn. And all this crew sets up at my house?

Col. Noa, noa, measter; the coachman is gone into the village to set up his coach at some inn, for I told him our coach-house was full of vaggots; but he'll bring back the six horses, for I told him we had a rear good steable.

Mr Barn. Did you so, rascal? Did you so? [*Beats him.*

Col. Doant, doant, sir; it would do you good to see sike cattle, i'faith; they look as if they had ne'er kept Lent.

Mr Barn. Then they shall learn religion at my house—Sirrah, do you take care they sup without oats to-night—What will become of me? Since I bought this damned country-house, I spend more in a summer than would maintain me seven years.

Col. Why, if you do spend money, han't you good things for it? Come they not to see you the whole country raund? Mind how you're beloved, measter.

Mr Barn. Pox take such love!—How now, what do you want?

Enter LISETTA.

Lis. Sir, there's some company in the garden with my mistress, who desire to see you.

Mr Barn. The devil take them! What business have they here? But who are they?

Lis. Why, sir, there's the fat abbot that always sits so long at dinner, and drinks his two bottles by way of whet.

Mr Barn. I wish his church was in his belly, that his guts might be half full before he came—And who else?

Lis. Then there's the young marquis, that won all my lady's money at cards.

Mr Barn. Pox take him too!

Lis. Then there's the merry lady that's always in a good humour.

Mr Barn. Very well.

Lis. Then there's she that threw down all my lady's china t'other day, and laughed at it for a jest.

Mr Barn. Which I paid above fifty pounds for, in earnest—Very well; and, pray, how did madam receive all this fine company? With a hearty welcome, and a courtsy down to the ground, ha?

Lis. No, indeed, sir; she was very angry with them.

Mr Barn. How! Angry with them, say you?

Lis. Yes, indeed, sir; for she expected they would have staid here a fortnight, but it seems things happen so unluckily, that they can't stay here above ten days.

Mr Barn. Ten days! how! what! four persons with a coach and six, and a kennel of hungry hounds in liveries, to live upon me ten days! [*Exit* LISETTA.

Enter a Soldier.

So! what do you want?

Sol. Sir, I come from your nephew, captain Hungry.

Mr Barn. Well, what does he want?

Sol. He gives his service to you, sir, and sends you word that he'll come and dine with you to-morrow.

Mr Barn. Dine with me! No, no, friend; tell him I don't dine at all, to-morrow; it is my fast day; my wife died on't.

Sol. And he has sent you here a pheasant and a couple of partridges.

Mr Barn. How's that? a pheasant and partridges, say you? Let's see; very fine birds, truly: let me consider—to-morrow is not my fast day; I mistook; tell my nephew he shall be welcome—And, d'ye hear?—[*To* COLIN.]—Do you take these fowl and hang them up in a cool place—and take this soldier in, and make him drink—make him drink, d'ye see—a cup—ay, a cup of small beer—d'ye hear?

Col. Yes, sir; come along; our small beer is reare good.

Sol. But, sir, he bade me tell you, that he'll bring two or three of his brother officers along with him.

Mr Barn. How's that! Officers with him!—Here, come back—take the fowls again: I don't dine to-morrow, and so tell him—[*Gives him the basket.*]—Go, go! [*Thrusts him out.*

Sol. Sir, sir, that won't hinder them from coming; for they retired a little distance off the camp, and because your house is near them, sir, they resolve to come.

Mr Barn. Go; begone, sirrah!—[*Thrusts him out.*]—There's a rogue, now, that sends me three lean carrion birds, and brings half a dozen varlets to eat them!

Enter MR GRIFFARD.

Grif. Brother, what is the meaning of these doings? If you don't order your affairs better, you'll have your fowls taken out of your very yard, and carried away before your face.

Mr Barn. Can I help it, brother? But what's the matter now?

Grif. There's a parcel of fellows have been hunting about your grounds all this morning, broke down your hedges, and are now coming into your house—Don't you hear them?

Mr Barn. No, no, I don't hear them: who are they?

Grif. Three or four rake-helly officers, with your nephew at the head of them.

Mr Barn. O the rogue! He might well send me fowls—but is it not a vexatious thing, that I must stand still and see myself plundered at this rate, and have a carrion of a wife who thinks I ought to thank all these rogues that come to devour me! But can't you advise me what's to be done in this case?

Grif. I wish I could; for it goes to my heart to see you thus treated by a crew of vermin, who think they do you a great deal of honour in ruining of you.

Mr Barn. Can there be no way found to redress this?

Grif. If I were you, I'd leave this house quite, and go to town.

Mr Barn. What, and leave my wife behind me? Ay, that would be mending the matter, indeed!

Grif. Why don't you sell it, then?

Mr Barn. Because nobody will buy it; it has got as bad a name as if the plague were in't; it has been sold over and over; and every family that has lived in it has been ruined.

Grif. Then send away all your beds and furniture, except what is absolutely necessary for your own family; you'll save something by that, for then your guests can't stay with you all night, however.

Mr Barn. I've tried that already, and it signified nothing——For they all got drunk, and lay in the barn, and next morning laughed it off for a frolic.

Grif. Then there is but one remedy left that I can think of

Mr Barn. What's that?

Grif. You must e'en do what's done when a town's on fire; blow up your house, that the mischief may run no farther—But who is this gentleman?

Mr Barn. I never saw him in my life before; but, for all that, I'll hold fifty pound he comes to dine with me.

Enter the MARQUIS.

Mar. My dear Mr Barnard, I'm your most humble servant!

Mr Barn. I don't doubt it, sir.

Mar. What is the meaning of this, Mr Barnard? You look as coldly upon me as if I were a stranger.

Mr Barn. Why truly, sir, I'm very apt to do so by persons I never saw in my life before.

Mar. You must know, Mr Barnard, I'm come on purpose to drink a bottle with you.

Mr Barn. That may be, sir; but it happens that at this time I am not at all dry.

Mar. I left the ladies at cards waiting for supper; for my part I never play; so I came to see my dear Mr Barnard! and, I'll assure you, I undertook this journey only to have the honour of your acquaintance.

Mr Barn. You might have spared yourself that trouble, sir.

Mar. Don't you know, Mr Barnard, that this house of yours is a little Paradise?

Mr Barn. Then rot me if it be, sir!

Mar. For my part, I think a pretty retreat in the country is one of the greatest comforts in life—I suppose you never want good company, Mr Barnard?

Mr Barn. No, sir, I never want company; for you must know I love very much to be alone.

Mar. Good wine you must keep, above all things—without good wine and good cheer, I would not give a fig for the country.

Mr Barn. Really, sir, my wine is the worst you ever drank in your life, and you'll find my cheer but very indifferent.

Mar. No matter, no matter, Mr Barnard. I've heard much of your hospitality; there's a plentiful table in your looks—and your wife is certainly one of the best women in the world.

Mr Barn. Rot me if she be, sir!

Enter COLIN.

Col. Sir, sir! yonder's the baron de Messey has lost his hawk in our garden; he says it is perched upon one of the trees; may we let him have'n again, sir?

Mr Barn. Go tell him, that——

Col. Nay, you may tell him yourself, for here he comes.

Enter the BARON DE MESSY.

Sir, I'm your most humble servant, and ask you a thousand pardons, that I should live so long in your neighbourhood, and come upon such an occasion as this, to pay you my first respects.

Mr Barn. It is very well, sir; but, I think people may be very good neighbours, without visiting one another.

Baron. Pray, how do you like our country?

Mr Barn. Not at all; I'm quite tired on't.

Mar. Is it not the Baron? [*Aside.*] It is certainly he.

Baron. How! my dear marquis! let me embrace you.

Mar. My dear baron, let me kiss you!

[*They run, and embrace.*

Baron. We have not seen one another since we were school-fellows, before!

Mar. The happiest rencontre!

Grif. These gentlemen seem to be very well acquainted.

Mr Barn. Yes; but I know neither one nor t'other of them.

Mar. Baron, let me present to you one of the best-natured men in the world! Mr Barnard here, the flower of hospitality!——I congratulate you upon having so good a neighbour.

Mr Barn. Sir!

Baron. It is an advantage I am proud of.

Mr Barn. Sir!

Mar. Come, gentlemen, you must be very intimate. Let me have the honour of bringing you better acquainted.

Mr Barn. Sir!

Baron. Dear marquis, I shall take it as a favour, if you'll do me that honour.

Mr Barn. Sir!

Mar. With all my heart—Come, baron, now you are here, we can make up the most agreeable company in the world——Faith! you shall stay and pass a few days with us.

Mr Barn. Methinks, now, this son of a whore does the honours of my house to a miracle!

Baron. I don't know what to say, but I should be very glad you'd excuse me.

Mar. Faith, I can't!

Baron. Dear marquis!

Mar. Egad, I won't!

Baron. Well, since it must be so——But here comes the lady of the family.

Enter MRS BARNARD.

Mar. Madam, let me present you to the flower of France.

Baron. Madam, I shall think myself the happiest person in the world in your ladyship's acquaintance; and the little estate I have in this country, I esteem more than all the rest, because it lies so near your ladyship.

Mr Barn. Sir, your most humble servant.

Mar. Madam, the baron de Messy is the best humoured man in the world. I've prevailed with him to give us his company a few days.

Mrs Barn. I'm sure you could not oblige Mr Barnard or me more.

Mr Barn. That's a damned lie, I'm sure! [*Aside.*

Baron. I'm sorry, madam, I can't accept of the honour—for it falls out so unluckily, that I've some ladies at my house, that I can't possibly leave.

Mar. No matter, no matter, baron; you have ladies at your house, we have ladies at our house—let's join companies——Come, let's send for them immediately—the more the merrier.

Mr Barn. An admirable expedient, truly!

Baron. Well, since it must be so, I'll go for them myself.

Mar. Make haste, dear baron; for we shall be impatient for your return.

Baron. Madam, your most humble servant—But I won't take my leave of you—I shall be back again immediately.——Monsieur Barnard, I'm your most humble servant: Since you will have it so, I'll return as soon as possible.

Mr Barn. I have it so! 'Sbud, sir! you may stay as long as ye please: I'm in no haste for ye. [*Exeunt* BARON *and* MARQUIS.

Madam, you are the cause that I am not master of my own house.

Mrs Barn. Will you never learn to be reasonable, husband?

The MARQUIS *returns.*

Mar. The baron is the best humoured man in the world; only a little too ceremonious, that's all—I love to be free and generous—Since I came to Paris, I've reformed half the court.

Mrs Barn. You are of the most agreeable humour in the world, marquis.

Mar. Always merry——But what have you done with the ladies?

Mrs Barn. I left them at cards.

Mar. Well, I'll wait upon them—but, madam, let me desire you not to put yourself to any extraordinary expence upon our accounts——You must consider we have more than one day to live together.

Mrs Barn. You are pleased to be merry, marquis.

Mar. Treat us without ceremony; good wine and poultry you have of your own; wild fowl and fish are brought to your door.——You need not send abroad for any thing but a piece of butcher's meat, or so——Let us have no extraordinaries. [*Exit.*

Mr Barn. If I had the feeding of you, a thunder-bolt should be your supper!

Mrs Barn. Husband, will you never change your humour? If you go on at this rate, it will be impossible to live with ye.

Mr Barn. Very true; for, in a little time, I shall have nothing to live upon!

Mrs Barn. Do you know what a ridiculous figure you make?

Mr Barn. You'll make a great deal worse, when you han't money enough to pay for the washing of your shifts.

Mrs Barn. It seems you married me only to dishonour me; How horrible is this!

Mr Barn. I tell ye, you'll ruin me! Do you know how much money you spend in a year?

Mrs Barn. Not I, truly; I don't understand arithmetic.

Mr Barn. Arithmetic! O lud, O lud! Is it so hard to comprehend, that he, who receives but sixpence, and spends a shilling, must be ruined in the end?

Mrs Barn. I never troubled my head with accounts, nor never will: But if ye did but know what ridiculous things the world says of ye——

Mr Barn. Rot the world!—'Twill say worse of me when I'm in a jail!

Mrs Barn. A very Christian-like saying, truly!

Mr Barn. Don't tell me of Christian—Ads-

bud! I'll turn Jew; and no body shall eat at my table that is not circumcised.

Enter LISETTA.

Lis. Madam, there's the duchess of Twangdillo just fell down near our door; her coach was overturned.

Mrs Barn. I hope her grace has received no hurt?

Lis. No, madam; but her coach is broke.

Mr Barn. Then, there's a smith in town may mend it.

Lis. They say, 'twill require two or three days to fit it up again.

Mrs Barn. I'm glad on't, with all my heart; for then I shall enjoy the pleasure of her grace's good company.——I'll wait upon her.

Mr Barn. Very fine doings this!

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter MR BARNARD.

Mr Barn. HEAVEN be now my comfort, for my house is hell! [*Starts.*] Who's there? what do you want? who are you?

Enter Servant, with a portmanteau.

Ser. Sir, here's your cousin Janno, and cousin Mawkin, come from Paris.

Mr Barn. What a plague do they want?

Enter JANNO, *leading in* MAWKIN.

Jan. Come, sister, come along——O, here's cousin Barnard!——Cousin Barnard, your servant—Here's my sister Mawkin, and I, are come to see you.

Maw. Ay, cousin, here's brother Janno and I are come from Paris to see you: Pray, how does cousin Mariamne do?

Jan. My sister and I wau'nt well at Paris; so my father sent us here for two or three weeks to take a little country air.

Mr Barn. You could not come to a worse place; for this is the worst air in the whole county.

Maw. Nay; I'm sure my father says it is the best.

Mr Barn. You father's a fool! I tell ye, 'tis the worst.

Jan. Nay, cousin, I fancy your mistaken, now; for I begin to find my stomach come to me already; in a fortnight's time, you shall see how I'll lay about me.

Mr Barn. I don't at all doubt it.

Maw. Father would have sent sister Flip, and little brother Humphrey; but the calash would not hold us all: and so they don't come till to-morrow with mother.

Jan. Come, sister, let's put up our things in our chamber; and, after you have washed my face, and put me on a clean neckcloth, we'll go in, and see how our cousins do.

Maw. Ay, come along; we'll go and see cousin Mariamne.

Jan. Cousin, we shan't give you much trouble; one bed will serve us; for sister Mawkin and I always lie together.

Maw. But, cousin, mother prays you, that you'd order a little cock-broth for brother Janno and I, to be got ready as soon as may be.

Jan. Ay, a-propos, cousin Barnard, that's true; my mother desires, that we may have some cock-broth, to drink two or three times a-day between meals, for my sister and I are sick folks.

Maw. And some young chickens, too, the doctor said, would bring us to our stomachs very soon.

Jan. You fib, now, sister; it wau'nt young chickens, so it wau'nt—it was plump partridges, sure, the doctor said so.

Maw. Ay, so it was, brother.——Come, let's go in, and see our cousins.

Jan. Ay, come along, sister—Cousin Barnard, don't forget the cock-broth.

[*Exeunt* JANNO *and* MAWKIN.

Mr Barn. What the devil does all this mean ——Mother, and sister Flip, and little brother Humphrey, and chickens, and partridges, and cock-broth, and fire from hell to dress them all!

Enter COLIN.

Col. O measter, O measter!—You'll not chide to-day, as you are usen to do; no marry, will you not: See, now, what it is to be wiser than one's measter.

Mr Barn. What would this fool have?

Col. Why, thanks, and money to-boot, an folk were grateful.

Mr Barn. What's the matter?

Col. Why, the matter is, if you have good store of company in your house, you have good store of meat to put in their bellies.

Mr Barn. How so? how so?

Col. Why, a large and stately stag, with a pair of horns on his head, Heaven bless you! your worship might be seen to wear them—comes towards our geat, a puffing and blawing like a cow in hard labour——Now, says I to myself, says I, if my measter refuse to let this fine youth come in—why, then he's a fool, d'ye see——So I opens him the geat, pulls off my hat with both my hands, and said, you're welcome, kind sir, to our house.

Mr Barn. Well, well!

Col. Well, well? ay, and so it is well, as you shall straight way find—So in he trots, and makes

directly towards our barn, and goes bounce, bounce, against the door, as boldly as if he had been measter on't———he turns' en about, and thawcks'n down in the straw; as who would say, here will I lay me till to-morrow morning——— But he had no fool to deal with; for to the kitchen goes I, and takes me down a musket, and, with a breace of balls, I hits'n such a slap in the feace, that he ne'er spoke a word more to me.—Have I done well or no, measter?

Mr Barn. Yes, you have done very well for once.

Col. But this was not all; for a parcel of dogs came yelping after their companion, as I suppose; so I goes to the back yard-door, and as many as came by, Shu, says I, and drove them into the gearden——So there they are, as safe as in a pawnd——Ha, ha!——But I can't but think what a power of pasties we shall have at our house—Ha, ha! [*Exit* COLIN.

Mr Barn. I see Providence takes some care of me: this could never have happened in a better time.

Enter Cook.

Cook. Sir, sir! in the name of wonder, what do you mean? is it by your orders that all those dogs were let into the garden?

Mr Barn. How!

Cook. I believe there's forty or fifty dogs tearing up the lettuce and cabbage by the root. I believe, before they have done, they'll rout up the whole garden.

Mr Barn. This is that rogue's doings.

Cook. This was not all, sir; for three or four of them came into the kitchen, and tore half the meat off the spit that was for your worship's supper.

Mr Barn. The very dogs plague me!

Cook. And then there's a crew of hungry footmen who devoured what the dogs left; so that there's not a bit left for your worship's supper, not a scrap, not one morsel, sir! [*Exit Cook.*

Mr Barn. Sure I shall hit on some way to get rid of this crew!

Enter COLIN.

Col. Sir, sir! here's the devil to do without yonder; a parcel of fellows swear they'll have our venison, and s'blead I swear they shall have none on't; so stand to your arms, measter.

Mr Barn. Ay, you've done finely, rogue, rascal, have you not? [*Beating him.*

Col. 'Sblead, I say they shan't have our venison. I'll die before I'll part with it. [*Exit.*

Enter GRIFFARD.

Grif. Brother, there's some gentlemen within ask for you.

Mr Barn. What gentlemen! Who are they?

Grif. The gentlemen that have been hunting all this morning; they're now gone up to your wife's chamber.

Mr Barn. The devil go with them!

Grif. There's but one way to get rid of this plague, and that is, as I told you before, to set your house on fire.

Mr Barn. That's doing myself an injury, not them.

Grif. There's dogs, horses, masters and servants, all intend to stay here 'till to-morrow morning, that they may be near the woods to hunt the earlier—besides (I over-heard them) they're in a kind of plot against you.

Mr Barn. What did they say?

Grif. You'll be more angry if I should tell ye, than I am.

Mr Barn. Can I be more angry?

Grif. They said then, that it was the greatest pleasure in the world to ruin an old lawyer in the country, who had got an estate by ruining honest people in town.

Mr Barn. There's rogues for ye!

Grif. I'm mistaken if they don't play you some trick or other.

Mr Barn. Hold, let me consider.

Grif. What are you doing?

Mr Barn. I'm conceiving; I shall bring forth presently———oh, I have it! it comes from hence; Wit was its father, and Invention its mother: if I had thonght on't sooner, I should have been happy.

Grif. What is it?

Mr Barn. Come, come along, I say; you must help me to put it in execution.

Enter LISETTA.

Lis. Sir, my mistress desires you to walk up; she is not able, by herself, to pay the civilities due to so much good company.

Mr Barn. O the carrion! What, does she play her jests upon me, too?——but mum; he laughs best that laughs last.

Lis. What shall I tell her, sir? will you come?

Mr Barn. Yes, yes; tell her I'll come with a pox to her!

[*Exeunt* MR BARNARD *and* GRIFFARD.

Lis. Nay, I don't wonder he should be angry—they do try his patience, that's the truth on't.

Enter MARIAMNE.

What, madam, have you left your mother and the company?

Mar. So much tittle tattle makes my head ache; I don't wonder my father should not love the country; for, besides the expence he's at, he never enjoys a minute's quiet.

Lis. But let's talk of your own affairs—have you writ to your lover?

Mar. No, for I have not had time since I saw him.

Lis. Now you have time, then, about it immediately, for he's a sort of a desperate spark, and a body does not know what he may do, if he

should not hear from you; besides, you promised him, and you must behave yourself like a woman of honour, and keep your word.

Mar. I'll about it this minute.

Enter CHARLY.

Char. Cousin, cousin, cousin! where are you going? Come back, I have something to say to you.

Lis. What does this troublesome boy want?

Char. What's that to you what I want? perhaps I have something to say to her that will make her laugh———why sure! what need you care?

Mar. Don't snub my cousin Charly——well, what is it?

Char. Who do you think I met, as I was coming here, but that handsome gentleman I've seen at church ogle you like any devil!

Mar. Hush! softly, cousin.

Lis. Not a word of that for your life.

Char. O, I know I should not speak on't before folks; you know I made signs to you above, that I wanted to speak to you in private, didn't I, cousin?

Mar. Yes, yes; I saw you.

Char. You see I can keep a secret——I am no girl, mun———I believe I could tell ye fifty, and fifty to that of my sister Cicely——O she's the devil of a girl!——but she gives me money and sugar-plumbs—and those that are kind to me fare the better for it, you see, cousin.

Mar. I always said my cousin Charly was a good-natured boy.

Lis. Well, and did he know you?

Char. Yes, I think he did know me—for he took me in his arms, and did so hug me and kiss me—between you and I, cousin, I believe he is one of the best friends I have in the world.

Mar. Well, but what did he say to you?

Char. Why, he asked me where I was going—I told him I was coming to see you—you're a lying young rogue, says he, I'm sure you dare not go see your cousin——for, you must know my sister was with me, and it seems he took her for a crack, and I being a forward boy, he fancied I was going to make love to her under a hedge, ha, ha!

Mar. So—

Char. So he offered to lay me a louis d'or that I was not coming to you; so, done, says I—Done, says he—and so 'twas a bett, you know.

Mar. Certainly.

Char. So, my sister's honour being concerned, and having a mind to win his louis d'or, d'ye see—I bid him follow me, that he might see whether I came in or no—but he said he'd wait for me at the little garden gate that opens into the fields, and if I would come through the house and meet him there, he should know by that whether I had been in or no.

Mar. Very well.

Char. So I went there, opened the gate, and let him in—

Mar. What then?

Char. Why, then he paid me the louis d'or, that's all.

Mar. Why, that was honestly done.

Char. And then he talked to me of you.

Mar. But was this all?

Char. No, for he had a mind, you must know, to win his louis d'or back again; so he laid me another, that I dare not come back, and tell you that he was there—so, cousin, I hope you won't let me lose, for if you don't go to him, and tell him that I've won, he won't pay me.

Mar. What, would you have me go and speak to a man?

Char. Not for any harm, but to win your poor cousin a louis d'or. I'm sure you will—for you're a modest young woman, and may go without danger. I'll swear you must.

Mar. What does the young rogue mean? I swear I'll have you whipt.

[*Exeunt* CHARLY *and* MARIAMNE.

Enter COLIN.

Col. Ha, ha, ha! our old gentleman's a wag, i'faith! he'll be even with them for all this—ha, ha, ha!

Lis. What's the matter? What does the fool laugh at?

Col. We an't in our house now, Lisetta; we're in an inn; ha, ha!

Lis. How in an inn?

Col. Yes, in an inn; my measter has gotten an old rusty sword, and hung it up at our geat, and writ underneath with a piece of charcoal, with his own fair hand, 'At the Sword Royal; entertainment for man and horse:' ha, ha——

Lis. What whim is this?

Col. Thou and I live at the Sword Royal, ha, ha—

Lis. I'll go tell my mistress of her father's extravagance. [*Exit* LISETTA.

Enter MR BARNARD *and* GRIFFARD.

Mr Barn. Ha, ha! yes, I think this will do. Sirrah, you may now let in all the world; the more the better.

Col. Yes, sir——Odsflesh! we shall break all the inns in the country——For we have a breave handsome landlady, and a curious young lass to her daughter———O, here comes my young measter———We'll make him Chamberlain—ha, ha!

Enter DORANT.

Mr Barn. What's the matter, son? How comes it that you are alone? You used to do me the

favour to bring some of your friends along with ye.

Dor. Sir, there are some of them coming; I only rid before, to beg you to give them a favourable reception.

Mr Barn. Ay, why not? It is both for your honour and mine; you shall be master.

Dor. Sir, we have now an opportunity of making all the gentlemen in the country our friends.

Mr Barn. I am glad on't with all my heart; pray, how so?

Dor. There's an old quarrel to be made up between two families, and all the company are to meet at our house.

Mr Barn. Ay, with all my heart; but, pray, what is the quarrel?

Dor. O, sir, a very ancient quarrel; it happened between their great grandfathers about a duck.

Mr Barn. A quarrel of consequence, truly!

Dor. And 'twill be a great honour to us, if this should be accommodated at our house.

Mr Barn. Without doubt.

Dor. Dear sir, you astonish me with this goodness; how shall I express this obligation? I was afraid, sir, you would not like it.

Mr Barn. Why so?

Dor. I thought, sir, you did not care for the expence.

Mr Barn. O, lord, I am the most altered man in the world from what I was; I am quite another thing, mun; but how many are there of them?

Dor. Not above nine or ten of a side, sir.

Mr Barn. O, we shall dispose of them easily enough.

Dor. Some of them will be here presently; the rest I don't expect till to-morrow morning.

Mr Barn. I hope they are good companions, jolly fellows, that love to eat and drink well?

Dor. The merriest, best-natured, creatures in the world, sir.

Mr Barn. I'm very glad on't, for 'tis such men I want. Come, brother, you and I will go and prepare for their reception.

[*Exeunt* MR BARNARD *and his brother.*

Dor. Bless me, what an alteration is here! How my father's temper is changed within these two or three days! Do you know the meaning of it?

Col. Why the meaning of it is—ha, ha! ——

Dor. Can you tell me the cause of this sudden change, I say?

Col. Why the cause of it is—ha, ha!

Dor. What do you laugh at, sirrah? do you know?

Col. Ha! Because the old gentleman is a droll, that's all.

Dor. Sirrah, if I take the cudgel ——

Col. Nay, sir, don't be angry, for a little harmless mirth—But here are your friends.

Enter three Gentlemen.

Dor. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Pasty-hall; see that these gentlemen's horses are taken care of.

1 *Gen.* A very fine dwelling this.

Dor. Yes, the house is tolerable.

2 *Gen.* And a very fine lordship belongs to it.

Dor. The land is good.

2 *Gen.* The house ought to have been mine; for my grandfather sold it to his father, from whom your father purchased it.

Dor. Yes, the house has gone through a great many hands.

1 *Gen.* A sign there has always been good house-keeping in it.

Dor. And I hope there ever will.

Enter MR BARNARD, *and* GRIFFARD, *dressed like drawers.*

Mr Barn. Gentlemen, do you call? will you please to see a room, gentlemen? some body take off the gentlemens' boots there.

Dor. Father! Uncle! what is the meaning of this?

Mr Barn. Here, shew a room——or will you please to walk into the kitchen, first, gentlemen; and see what you like for dinner?

1 *Gen.* Make no preparations, sir; your own dinner is sufficient.

Mr Barn. Very well, I understand ye; let us see, how many are there of ye? [*Tells them.*]—One, two, three, four: well, gentlemen, 'tis but half a crown-piece for yourselves, and sixpence a head for your servants; your dinner shall be ready in half an hour; here, shew the gentlemen into the Apollo.

2 *Gen.* What, sir, does your father keep an inn?

Mr Barn. The Sword Royal; at your service, sir.

Dor. But, father, let me speak to you; would you disgrace me?

Mr Barn. My wine is very good, gentlemen; but, to be very plain with ye, it is dear.

Dor. I shall run distracted.

Mr Barn. You seem not to like my house, gentlemen; you may try all the inns in the county, and not be better entertained: but I own my bills run high.

Dor. Gentlemen, let me beg the favour of ye!

1 *Gen.* Ay, my young squire of the Sword-Royal, you shall receive some favours from us!

Dor. Dear Monsieur le Garantiere!

1 *Gen.* Here, my horse there.

Dor. Monsieur la Rose!

2 *Gen.* Damn ye, ye prig!

3 *Gen.* Go to the devil!

[*Exeunt Gentlemen.*

Dor. O, I am disgraced for ever!

Mr Barn. Now, son, this will teach you how to live.

Dor. Your son? I deny the kindred; I'm the son of a whore, and I'll burn your house about your ears. [*Exit.*

Mr Barn. Ha, ha———

Grif. The young gentleman is in a passion.

Mr Barn. They're all gone for all that, and the Sword-Royal's the best general in Christendom.

Enter ERASTUS's *Servant talking with* LISETTA.

Lis. What, that tall gentleman I saw in the garden with ye?

Ser. The same; he's my master's uncle, and ranger of the king's forests——He intends to leave my master all he has.

Mr Barn. Don't I know this scoundrel? What, is his master here? What do you do here, rascal?

Ser. I was asking which must be my master's chamber.

Mr Barn. Where is your master?

Ser. Above stairs with your wife and daughter; and I want to know where he is to lie, that I may put up his things.

Mr Barn. Do you so, rascal?

Ser. A very handsome inn this!———Here, drawer, fetch me a pint of wine.

Mr Barn. Take that, rascal, do you banter us? [*Kicks him out.*

Enter MRS BARNARD.

Mrs Barn. What is the meaning of this, husband? Are not you ashamed to turn your house into an inn? And is this a dress for my spouse, and a man of your character?

Mr Barn. I would rather wear this dress than be ruined.

Mrs Barn. You are nearer being so than you imagine; for there are some persons within, who have it in their power to punish you for your ridiculous folly.

Enter ERASTUS, *leading in* MARIAMNE.

Mr Barn. How, sir, what means this? who sent you here?

Era. It was the luckiest star in your firmament, that sent me here.

Mr Barn. Then I doubt, at my birth, the planets were but in a scurvy disposition.

Era. Killing one of the king's stags, that run hither for refuge, is enough to overturn a fortune much better established than yours—However, sir, if you will consent to give me your daughter, for her sake I will bear you harmless.

Mr Barn. No, sir; no man shall have my daughter, that won't take my house, too.

Era. Sir, I will take your house; pay you the full value of it, and you shall remain as much master of it as ever.

Mr Barn. No, sir; that won't do neither; you must be master yourself, and from this minute begin to do the honours of it in your own person.

Era. Sir, I readily consent.

Mr Barn. Upon that condition, and in order to get rid of my house, here take my daughter—And, now, sir, if you think you've a hard bargain, I don't care if I toss you in my wife, to make you amends.

Well, then, since all things thus are fairly sped,
My son in anger, and my daughter wed;
My house disposed of, the sole cause of strife,
I now may hope to lead a happy life,
If I can part with my engaging wife.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

CONTRIVANCES.

BY

CAREY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
ROVEWELL, *attached to* ARETHUSA.	ARETHUSA, *attached to* ROVEWELL.
ARGUS, *father to* ARETHUSA.	BETTY, *maid to* ARETHUSA.
HEARTY, *father to* ROVEWELL, *but unknown to him.*	
ROBIN, *servant to* ROVEWELL.	

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Rovewell's lodgings.*

ROBIN *solus.*

Rob. WELL, though pimping is the most honourable and profitable of all professions, it is certainly the most dangerous and fatiguing; but of all fatigues, there's none like following a virtuous mistress—There's not one letter I carry, but I run the risk of kicking, caneing, or pumping, nay, often hanging—Let me see; I have committed three burglaries to get one letter to her—Now, if my master should not get the gipsey at last, I have ventured my sweet person to a fair purpose—But, Basta! here comes my master and his friend Mr Hearty—I must hasten and get our disguises.

And if dame Fortune fails us now to win her,
Oh, all ye gods above! the devil's in her. [*Exit.*

Enter ROVEWELL *and* HEARTY.

Hear. Why so melancholy, captain? Come, come, a man of your gaiety and courage should never take a disappointment so much to heart.

Rov. 'Sdeath! to be prevented, when I had brought my design so near perfection!

Hear. Were you less open and daring in your attempts, you might hope to succeed——The old gentleman, you know, is cautious to a degree; his daughter under a strict confinement: would you use more of the fox than the lion, Fortune, perhaps, might throw an opportunity in your way—But you must have patience.

Rov. Who can have patience when danger is so near? Read this letter, and then tell me what room there is for patience.

[HEARTY *reads.*] 'To-morrow will prevent all 'our vain struggles to get to each other—I am 'then to be married to my eternal aversion! you 'know the fop; 'tis Cuckoo, who, having a large 'estate, is forced upon me—but my heart can be 'none but Rovewell's. Immediately after the 'receipt of this, meet Betty at the old place; 'there is yet one invention left; if you pursue it

'closely, you may perhaps release her, who would 'be your—— 'ARETHUSA.'

Rov. Yes, Arethusa, I will release thee, or die in the attempt! Dear friend, excuse my rudeness; you know the reason.

AIR.

I'll face every danger
To rescue my dear,
For fear is a stranger,
Where love is sincere.
Repulses but fire us,
Despair we despise,
If beauty inspire us
To pant for the prize. [*Exit.*

Hear. Well, go thy way, and get her; for thou deserv'st her, o' my conscience—How have I been deceived in this boy! I find him the very reverse of what his step-mother represented him; and am now sensible it was only her ill-usage that forced my child away—His not having seen me since he was five years old, renders me a perfect stranger to him—Under that pretence I have got into his acquaintance, and find him all I wish—If this plot of his fails, I believe my money must buy him the girl at last. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A chamber in* ARGUS'S *house.*

ARETHUSA *sola.*

AIR.

Are. See! the radiant queen of night
Sheds on all her kindly beams;
Gilds the plains with cheerful light,
And sparkles in the silver streams.
Smiles adorn the face of Nature,
Tasteless all things yet appear,
Unto me a hopeless creature,
In the absence of my dear.

Enter ARGUS.

Arg. Pray, daughter, what lingo is that same you chant and sputter out at this rate?

Are. English, sir.

Arg. English, quotha! adod I took it to be nonsense.

Are. 'Tis a hymn to the moon.

Arg. A hymn to the moon! I'll have none of your hymns in my house—Give me the book, housewife.

Are. I hope, sir, there is no crime in reading a harmless poem?

Arg. Give me the book, I say? poems, with a pox! what are they good for, but to blow up the fire of love, and make young wenches wanton?—But I have taken care of you, mistress! for to-morrow you shall have a husband to stay your stomach, and no less a person than 'squire Cuckoo.

Are. You will not, surely, be so cruel as to marry me to a man I cannot love?

Arg. Why, what sort of a man would you have, Mrs Minx?

AIR.

Are. Genteel in personage,
Conduct, and equipage,
Noble by heritage,
Generous and free:
Brave, not romantic;
Learned, not pedantic;
Frolic, not frantic;
This must be he.
Honour maintaining,
Meanness disdaining,
Still entertaining,
Engaging and new.
Neat, but not finical;
Sage, but not cynical;
Never tyrannical,
But ever true.

Arg. Why, is not Mr Cuckoo all this? Adod, he's a brisk young fellow, and a little feather-bed doctrine will soon put the captain out of your head; and, to put you out of his power, you shall be given over to the squire to-morrow.

Are. Surely, sir, you will at least defer it one day.

Arg. No, nor one hour—To-morrow morning, at eight of the clock precisely—In the mean time, take notice, the squire's sister is hourly expected; so, pray do you be civil and sociable with her, and let me have none of your pouts and glouts, as you tender my displeasure. [*Exit* ARGUS.

Are. To-morrow is short warning: but we may be too cunning for you yet, old gentleman.

Enter BETTY.

O Betty! welcome a thousand times! what news? have you seen the captain?

Bet. Yes, madam; and if you were to see him in his new rigging, you'd split your sides with laughing—Such a hoyden, such a piece of country stuff, you never set your eyes on!—But the petticoats are soon thrown off; and if good luck attends us, you may easily conjure Miss Malkin, the squire's sister, into your own dear captain.

Are. But when will they come?

Bet. Instantly, madam; he only stays to settle matters for our escape. He's in deep consultation with his privy-counsellor Robin, who is to attend him in the quality of a country put—— They'll both be here in a moment; so let's in, and pack up the jewels, that we may be ready at once to leap into the saddle of liberty, and ride full speed to your desires.

Arc. Dear Betty, let's make haste; I think every moment an age till I'm free from this bondage.

AIR.

When parents obstinate and cruel prove,
And force us to a man we cannot love,
'Tis fit we disappoint the sordid elves,
And wisely get us husbands for ourselves.

Bet. There they are——in, in!
[*A knocking without.*

ARGUS *from above.*

Arg. You're woundy hasty, methinks, to knock at that rate—This is certainly some courtier come to borrow money; I know it by the saucy rapping of the footman—Who's at the door?

Rob. Tummos! [*Without doors.*

Arg. Tummos! Who's Tummos? Who would you speak with, friend?

Rob. With young master's vather-in-law, that mun be, master Hardguts.

Arg. And what's your business with master Hardguts?

Rob. Why, young mistress is come out of the country to see brother's wife, that mun be, that's all.

Arg. Odso, the squire's sister! I'm sorry I made her wait so long. [*Exit hastily.*

SCENE III.—*A chamber.*

ARGUS *introducing* ROVEWELL *in woman's clothes, followed by* ROBIN *as a clown.*

Arg. Save you, fair lady! you're welcome to town. [ROVEWELL *curtseys.*] A very modest maiden, truly! How long have you been in town?

Rob. Why, an hour and a bit or so——we just put up horses at King's Arms yonder, and staid a crum to zee poor things feed, for your London ostlers give little enough to poor beasts; an' you stond not by 'em yourzell, and see 'em fed, as soon as your back's turned, adod, they'll cheat you afore your face.

Arg. Why, how now, Clodpate? are you to speak before your mistress, and with your hat on, too? Is that your country-breeding?

Rob. Why, an' 'tis on, 'tis on, an' 'tis off, 'tis off—what cares Tummos for your false-hearted London compliments? An' you'd have an answer from young mistress, you mun look to Tummos; for she's so main bashful, she never speaks one word but her prayers, and thos'n so softly that nobody can hear her.

Arg. I like her the better for that; silence is a heavenly virtue in a woman, but very rare to be found in this wicked place. Have you seen your brother, pretty lady, since you came to town? [ROVEWELL *curtseys.*] O, miraculous modesty! would all women were thus! Can't you speak, madam? [ROVEWELL *curtseys again.*]

Rob. An' you get a word from her, 'tis more nor she has spoken to us these fourscore and seven long miles; but young mistress will prate fast enough, an' you set her among your women volk.

Arg. Say'st thou so, honest fellow? I'll send her to those that have tongue enough, I'll warrant you. Here, Betty!

Enter BETTY.

Take this young lady to my daughter; 'tis squire Cuckoo's sister; and, d'ye hear? make much of her, I charge you.

Bet. Yes, sir———Please to follow me, madam.

Rove. Now, you rogue, for a lie an hour and a half long, to keep the old fellow in suspence.
[*Aside to* ROBIN. *Exit with* BETTY.

Rob. Well, master! don't you think my mistress a dainty young woman? She's wonderfully bemired in our country for her shapes.

Arg. Oh, she's a fine creature, indeed! But, where's the squire, honest friend?

Rob. Why, one cannot find a man out in this same Londonshire, there are so many taverns and chockling housen; you may as well syek a needle in a hay fardel, as they say'n i' the country. I was at squire's lodging yonder, and there was nobody but a prate-apace whoreson of a foot-boy, and he told me maister was at a chockling house, and all the while the vixon did nothing but taunt and laugh at me: I'cod, I could have found in my heart to have gi'n him a good whirrit in the chops. So, I went to one chockling house, and t'other chockling-house, till I was quite weary; and I could see nothing but a many people supping hot suppings, and reading your gazing papers: we had much ado to find out your worship's house; the vixon boys set us o' thick side, and that side, till we were almost quite lost; an' it were not for an honest fellow that knowed your worship, and set us in the right way.

Arg. 'Tis pity they should use strangers so; but as to your young mistress, does she never speak?

Rob. Adod, sir, never to a mon; why, she wo'not speak to her own father, she's so main bashful.

Arg. That's strange, indeed! But how does my friend, sir Roger? he's well, I hope?

Rob. Hearty still, sir—He has drunk down six fox-hunters sin last Lammas! He holds his old course still; twenty pipes a-day, a cup of mum in the morning, a tankard of ale at noon, and three bottles of stingo at night. The same mon now he was thirty years ago; and young squire Yedward is just come from varsity; lawd, he's mainly growd sin you saw him! he's a fine proper tall gentleman now; why he's near upon as tall as you or I, mun.

Arg. Good now, good now! But wouldst drink, honest friend.

Rob. I don't care an' I do, a bit or so; for, to say truth, I'm mortal dry.

Arg. Here, John!

Enter Servant.

Take this honest fellow down, and make him welcome. When your mistress is ready to go, we'll call you.

Rob. Ah! pray, take care and make much of me, for I am a bitter honest fellow, an' you did but know me. [*Exit* ROBIN, *with servant.*

Arg. These country fellows are very blunt, but very honest. I would fain hear his mistress talk. He said she would find her tongue when she was amongst those of her own sex. I'll go listen for once, and hear what the young tits have to say to one another. [*Exit.*

Enter ROVEWELL, ARETHUSA, *and* BETTY.

Rove. Dear Arethusa, delay not the time thus; your father will certainly come in and surprise us.

Bet. Let us make hay while the sun shines, madam: I long to be out of this prison.

Are. So do I; but not on the captain's conditions, to be his prisoner for life.

Rove. I shall run mad if you trifle thus: name your conditions; I sign my consent before-hand. [*Kisses her.*

Are. Indeed, captain, I am afraid to trust you.

AIR.

Cease to persuade,
Nor say you love sincerely;
When you've betrayed,
You'll treat me most severely,
And fly what once you did pursue.
Happy the fair
Who ne'er believes you,
But gives despair,
Or else deceives you,
And learns inconstancy from you.

Rove. Unkind Arethusa! I little expected this usage from you.

AIR.

When did you see
Any falsehood in me,
That thus you unkindly suspect me?
Speak, speak your mind;
For I fear you're inclined,
In spite of my truth, to reject me.
If it must be so,
To the wars I will go,
Where danger my passion shall smother;
I'd rather perish there,
Than linger in despair,
Or see you in the arms of another.

Enter ARGUS, *behind.*

So, so! this is as it should be; they are as gracious as can be already——How the young tit smuggles her! Adod, she kisses with a hearty good-will.

Are. I must confess, captain, I am half inclined to believe you.

Arg. Captain! how is this! bless my eyesight! I know the villain now; but I'll be even with him.

Bet. Dear madam, don't trifle so; the parson is at the very next door, you'll be tacked together in an instant; and then I'll trust you to come back to your cage again, if you can do it with a safe conscience.

Arg. Here's a treacherous jade! but I'll do your business for you, Mrs Jezebel.

Bet. Consider, madam, what a life you lead here; what a jealous, ill-natured, watchful, covetous, barbarous, old cuff of a father you have to deal with—What a glorious opportunity this is, and what a sad, sad, very sad thing it is, to die a maid!

AIR.

Would you live a stale virgin for ever?
Sure you are out of your senses,
Or these are pretences;
Can you part with a person so clever?
In troth you are highly to blame.
And you, my lover, to trifle;
I thought that a soldier,
Was wiser and bolder!
A warrior should plunder and rifle;
A captain! Oh, fie for shame!

Arg. If that jade dies a maid, I'll die a martyr.

Bet. In short, madam, if you stay much longer, you may repent it every vein in your heart—The old hunks will undoubtedly pop in upon us and discover all, and then we're undone for ever.

Arg. You may go to the devil for ever, Mrs Impudence!

Are. Well, captain, if you should deceive me!

Rov. If I do, may heaven———

Are. Nay, no swearing, captain, for fear you should prove like the rest of your sex.

Rov. How can you doubt me, Arethusa, when you know how much I love you?

Arg. A wheedling dog! But I'll spoil his sport anon.

Bet. Come, come away, dear madam!——I have the jewels; but stay, I'll go first, and see if the coast be clear. [ARGUS *meets her.*

Arg. Where are you a-going, pretty maiden?

Bet. Only do—do—do—down stairs, sir.

Arg. And what hast thou got there, child?

Bet. Nothing but pi—pi—pi—pins, sir.

Arg. Here, give me the pins, and do you go to hell, Mrs Minx! D'ye hear? out of my house this moment! these are chamber jades, forsooth! —*O tempora! O mores!* what an age is this! Get you in forsooth; I'll talk with you anon. [*Exit* ARETHUSA.] So, captain, are those your regimental clothes? I'll assure you they become you mightily. If you did but see yourself now, how much like a hero you look! *Ecce signum!* ha, ha, ha!

Rove. Blood and fury! stop your grinning, or I'll stretch your mouth with a vengeance.

Arg. Nay, nay, captain Belswagger, if you're so passionate, 'tis high time to call aid and assistance: here, Richard, Thomas, John! help me to lay hold on this fellow; you have no sword now, captain; no sword, d'ye mark me?

Enter Servants and ROBIN.

Rov. But I have a pistol, sir, at your service. [*Pulls out a pistol.*

Arg. O Lord! O Lord!

Rove. And I'll unload it in your breast, if you stir one step after me.

Arg. A bloody-minded dog! But lay hold on that rogue there, that country-cheat.

Rob. See here, gentlemen, are two little bull-dogs of the same breed (*Presenting two pistols.*) they are wonderful scourers of the brain;——so that, if you offer to molest or follow me——you understand me, gentlemen? you understand me?

1 *Ser.* Yes, yes; we understand you, with a pox!

2 *Ser.* The devil go with them, I say!

Arg. Ay, ay; good-bye to you, in the devil's name.—A terrible dog!—what a fright he has put me in!—I shan't be myself this month. And you, ye cowardly rascals! to stand by and see my life in danger; get out, ye slaves! out of my house, I say!——I'll put an end to all this; for I'll not have a servant in the house.—I'll carry all the keys in my pocket, and never sleep more. What a murdering son of a whore is this! But I'll prevent him; for to-morrow she shall be married certainly, and then my furious gentleman can have no hopes left.——A Jezabel, to have a red-coat without any money!—Had he but money—if he wanted sense, manners, or even manhood itself, it mattered not a pin;—but to want money is the devil! Well, I'll secure her under lock and key till to-morrow; and if her husband can't keep her from captain-hunting, e'en let her bring him a fresh pair of horns every time she goes out upon the chase. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber.*

ARETHUSA *discovered sitting melancholy on a couch.*

AIR.

O leave me to complain
My loss of liberty!
I never more shall see my swain,
Nor ever more be free.
O cruel, cruel Fate!
What joy can I receive,
When in the arms of one I hate,
I'm doomed, alas, to live?
Ye pitying pow'rs above,
That see my soul's dismay,
Or bring me back the man I love,
Or take my life away.

Enter ARGUS.

Arg. So, lady! you're welcome home!—See how the pretty turtle sits moaning the loss of her mate!—What! not a word, Thusy? not a word, child? Come, come; don't be in the dumps now, and I'll fetch the captain, or the 'squire's sister: perhaps they may make it prattle a bit———Ah, ungracious girl! Is all my care come to this? Is this the gratitude you show your uncle's memory, to throw away what he had bustled so hard for, at so mad a rate? Did he leave you 12,000l. think you, to make you no better than a soldier's trull? to follow a camp? to carry a knapsack? This is what you'd have, mistress, is it not?

Are. This, and ten thousand times worse, were better with the man I love, than to be chained to the nauseous embraces of one I hate.

Arg. A very dutiful lady, indeed! I'll make you sing another song to-morrow; and, till then, I'll leave you *in salva custodia*, to consider.——B'ye, Thusy!

Are. How barbarous is the covetousness and caution of ill-natured parents! They toil for estates with a view to make posterity happy; and then, by a mistaken prudence, they match us to our aversion. But I am resolved not to suffer tamely, however.—They shall see, though my body's weak, my resolution's strong; and I may yet find spirit enough to plague them.

AIR.

Sooner than I'll my love forego,
And lose the man I prize,
I'll bravely combat every woe,
Or fall a sacrifice.
Nor bolts nor bars shall me controul,
I death and danger dare;

Restraint but fires the active soul,
And urges fierce despair.
The window now shall be my gate,
I'll either fall or fly;
Before I'll live with him I hate,
For him I love I'll die. [*Adieu.*

SCENE II.—*The Street.*

HEARTY *and* ROVEWELL *meeting.*

Rov. So, my dear friend, here already?——This is very kind.

Hear. Sure, captain, this lady must have some extraordinary merit for whom you undertake such difficulties! What are her particular charms besides her money?

Rove. I'll tell you, sir.

AIR.—*The words by another hand.*

Without affectation, gay, youthful, and pretty;
Without pride or meanness, familiar and witty;
Without forms, obliging, good-natured, and free;
Without art, as lovely as lovely can be.
She acts what she thinks, and she thinks what she says,
Regardless alike both of censure and praise;
Her thoughts, and her words, and her actions are such,
That none can admire them, or praise her, too much.

Hear. Well, success attend you!———You know where to find me when there's occasion. [*Exit.*

Enter BOY.

Boy. Sir, sir! I want to speak with you.

Rove. Is your mistress locked up, say you?

Boy. Yes, sir, and Betty's turned away, and all the men-servants; and there's no living soul in the house but our old cook-maid, and I, and my master, and Mrs Thusy; and she cries, and cries her eyes out almost.

Rove. O the tormenting news! But if the garrison is so weak, the castle may be the sooner stormed. How did you get out?

Boy. Through the kitchen-window, sir.

Rove. Show me the window presently.

Boy. Alack-a-day, it won't do, sir! That plot won't take!

Rove. Why, sirrah?

Boy. You are something too big, sir.

Rove. I'll try that, however.

Boy. Indeed, sir, you can't get your leg in; but I could put you in a way.

Rove. How, dear boy!

Boy. I can lend you the key of Mrs Thusy's chamber——If you can contrive to get into the house——But you must be sure to let my mistress out.

Rove. How couldst thou get it! This is almost a miracle.

Boy. I picked it out of my master's coat-pocket this morning, sir, as I was a-brushing him.

Rove. That's my boy! There's money for you: this child will come to good in time.

Boy. My master will miss me, sir, I must go; but I wish you good luck. [*Exit.*

AIR.

ARETHUSA, *at the window above.*

A dialogue between her and ROVEWELL.

Rove. Make haste and away, my only dear;
Make haste, and away, away!
For all at the gate,
Your true lover does wait,
And I prithee make no delay.
Are. O how shall I steal away, my love?
O how shall I steal away?
My daddy is near,
And I dare not for fear;
Pray, come then another day.
Rov. O this is the only day, my life!
O this is the only day!
I'll draw him aside,
While you throw the gates wide,
And then you may steal away.
Are. Then, prithee make no delay, my dear;
Then, prithee make no delay:
We'll serve him a trick;
For I'll slip in the nick,
And with my true love away.

CHORUS.

O Cupid, befriend a loving pair!
O Cupid, befriend us, we pray!
May our stratagems take,
For thine own sweet sake;
And, Amen! let all true lovers say.
[ARETHUSA *withdraws.*

Enter ROBIN *as a lawyer, and soldiers.*

Rov. So, my hearts of oaks, are you all ready?

Sold. Yes, an't please your honour.

Rove. You know your cue then———to your post.

[*They retire to a corner of the stage; he knocks smartly at the door.*

Rob. What, are you all asleep, or dead in the house, that you can't hear?

[ARGUS, *holding the door in his hand.*

Arg. Sir, you are very hasty, methinks——

Rob. Sir, my business requires haste.

Arg. Sir, you had better make haste about it, for I know no business you have here.

Rob. Sir, I am come to talk with you on an affair of consequence.

Arg. Sir, I don't love talking; I know you not, and consequently can have no affairs with you.

Rob. Sir, not know me!

Arg. Sir, 'tis enough for me to know myself.

Rob. A damned thwarting old dog this same! [*Aside.*] Sir, I live but just in the next street. [*To him.*

Arg. Sir! if you lived at Jamaica, 'tis the same thing to me.

Rob. [*Aside.*] I find coaxing won't do. I must change my note, or I shall never unkennel this old fox——[*To him.*] Well, Mr Argus, there's no harm done, so take your leave of 3000l. You have enough of your own already. [*Going.*

Arg. How! 3000.! I must inquire into this. [*Aside.*] Sir, a word with you.

Rob. Sir! I have nothing to say to you. I took you to be a prudent person, that knew the worth of money, and how to improve it; but, I find I'm deceived.

Arg. Sir, I hope you'll excuse my rudeness; but, you know, a man cannot be too cautious.

Rob. Sir, that's true; and, therefore, I excuse you; but I'd take such treatment from no man in England besides yourself.

Arg. Sir, I beg your pardon; but, to the business.

Rob. Why, thus it is: a spendthrift young fellow is galloping through a plentiful fortune: I have lent 2000l. upon it already; and, if you'll advance an equivalent, we'll foreclose the whole estate, and share it between us; for, I know, he can never redeem it.

Arg. A very judicious man; I'm sorry I affronted him. [*Aside.*] But how is this to be done?

Rob. Very easily, sir.—A word in your ear; a little more this way.

[*Draws him aside; the soldiers get between him and the door.*]

Arg. But the title, sir, the title?

Rob. Do you doubt my veracity?

Arg. Not in the least, sir; but one cannot be too sure.

Rob. That's very true, sir; and, therefore, I'll make sure of you, now I have you.

[ROBIN *trips up his heels; the soldiers blindfold and gag him, and stand over him, while* ROVEWELL *carries* ARETHUSA *off; after which, they leave him, he making a great noise.*

Enter Mob.

All. What's the matter, what's the matter? [*They ungag him, &c.*

Arg. O neighbours! I'm robbed and murdered, ruined, and undone for ever.

1 *Mob.* Why, what's the matter, master?

Arg. There's a whole legion of thieves in my house; they gagged and blindfolded me, and offered forty naked swords at my breast——I beg of you to assist me, or they'll strip the house in a minute.

2 *Mob.* Forty drawn swords, say you, sir?

Arg. Ay; and more, I think, on my conscience.

2 *Mob.* Then, look you, sir, I'm a married man, and have a large family; I would not venture amongst such a parcel of blood-thirsty rogues for the world; but, if you please, I'll run and call a constable.

All. Ay, ay; call a constable, call a constable!

Arg. I shan't have a penny left, if we stay for a constable——I am but one man; and, as old as I am, I'll lead the way, if you'll follow me. [*Exit* ARG.

All. Ay, ay, in, in; follow, follow; huzza!

1 *Mob.* Prithee, Jack, do you go in, if you come to that.

4 *Mob.* I go in! what should I go in for? I have lost nothing.

Wom. What! nobody to help the poor old gentleman? odds bobs! if I was a man, I'd follow him myself.

3 *Mob.* Why don't you, then? What occasionableness have I to be killed for him or you either?

Enter ROBIN, *as constable.*

All. Here's Mr Constable, here's Mr Constable!

Rob. Silence, in the king's name!

All. Ay, silence, silence.

Rob. What's the meaning of this riot? Who makes all this disturbance?

1 *Mob.* I'll tell you, Mr Constable.

3 *Mob.* An't please your worship, let me speak.

Rob. Ay; this man talks like a man of parts—What's the matter, friend?

3 *Mob.* An't please your noble worship's honour and glory, we are his majesty's liege subjects, and were terrified out of our habitations and dwelling-places, by a cry from abroad; which your noble worship must understand was occasionable by the gentleman of this house, who was so unfortunable as to be killed by thieves, who are now in his house to the numberation of above forty, an't please your worship, all completely armed with powder and ball, back-swords, pistols, bayonets, and blunderbusses!

Rob. But what is to be done in this case?

3 *Mob.* Why, an please your worship, knowing your noble honour to be the king's majesty's noble officer of the peace, we thought 'twas best your honour should come and terrify these rogues away with your noble authority.

Rob. Well said; very well said, indeed!——Gentlemen, I am the king's officer, and I command you, in the king's name, to aid and assist me to call those rogues out of the house—Who's

within there? I charge you come out, in the king's name, and submit yourselves to our royal authority.

2 *Mob.* This is the gentleman that was killed, an't please your worship.

Enter ARGUS.

Arg. O neighbours! I'm ruined and undone for ever! They have taken away all that's dear to me in the world.

1 *Mob.* That's his money; 'tis a sad covetous dog.

Rob. Why, what's the matter? What have they done?

Arg. O, they have taken my child from me, my Thusy!

Rob. Good lack!

3 *Mob.* Marry come up, what valuation can she be?——But, have they taken nothing else?

Arg. Would they had stript my house of every pennyworth, so they had left my child!

1 *Mob.* That's a lie, I believe; for he loves his money more than his soul, and would sooner part with that than a groat.

Arg. This is the captain's doings, but I'll have him hanged.

Rob. But where are the thieves?

Arg. Gone, gone, beyond all hopes of pursuit.

2 *Mob.* What! are they gone? Then, come neighbours, let us go in, and kill every mother's child of them.

Rob. Hold; I charge you to commit no murder; follow me, and we'll apprehend them.

Arg. Go, villains, cowards, scoundrels, or I shall suspect you are the thieves that mean to rob me of what is yet left. How brave you are, now all the danger's over! Oh, sirrah, you dog! [*Looking at* ROBIN.] you are that rogue, Robin, the captain's man. Seize him, neighbours, seize him!

Rob. [*Aside.*] I don't care what you do, for the job's over; I see my master a-coming.

Arg. Why don't you seize him, I say?

Mob. Not we; we have lost too much time about an old fool already.

2 *Mob.* Ay; the next time you're bound and gagged, you shall lie and be damned for me!

3 *Mob.* Ay, and me, too; come along, neighbours, come along. [*Exeunt Mob.*

Enter ROVEWELL, HEARTY, ARETHUSA, *and* BETTY.

Arg. Bless me! who have we got here? O Thusy! Thusy! I had rather never have seen thee again, than have found you in such company.

Are. Sir, I hope my husband's company is not criminal!

Arg. Your husband! who's your husband, housewife? that scoundrel? Captain—Out of my sight, thou ungracious wretch!——I'll go make my will this instant——and you, you villain! how dare you look me in the face after all this?——I'll have you hanged, sirrah! I will so.

Hear. O fie, brother Argus! moderate your passion. It ill becomes the friendship you owe Ned Worthy, to vilify and affront his only child, and for no other crime than improving that friendship which has ever been between us.

Arg. Ha! my dear friend alive! I heard thou wert dead in the Indies—And is that thy son? and my godson, too, if I am not mistaken?

Hear. The very same—the last and best remains of our family; forced by my wife's cruelty, and my absence, to the army. My wife is since dead, and the son she had by her former husband, whom she intended to heir my estate; but fortune guided me by chance to my dear boy, who, after twenty years absence, and changing my name, knew me not, till I just now discovered myself to him and your fair daughter, whom I will make him deserve by thirty thousand pounds, which I brought from India, besides what real estate I may leave at my death.

Arg. And to match that, old boy, my daughter shall have every penny of mine, besides her uncle's legacy——Ah! you young rogue, had I known you, I would not have used you so roughly!——However, since you have won my girl so bravely, take her, and welcome——But you must excuse all faults——the old man meant all for the best; you must not be angry.

Rov. Sir, on the contrary, we ought to beg your pardon for the many disquiets we have given you; and, with your pardon, we crave your blessing. [*They kneel.*

Arg. You have it, children, with all my heart. Adod, I am so transported, I don't know whether I walk or fly!

Are. May your joy be everlasting!

ROVEWELL *and* ARETHUSA, *embracing.*

DUETTO.

Thus fondly caressing,
My idol, my treasure,
How great is the blessing!
How sweet is the pleasure!
With joy I behold thee,
And doat on thy charms;
Thus while I enfold thee,
I've heaven in my arms.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

DEVIL TO PAY;

OR,

THE WIVES METAMORPHOSED.

BY

COFFEY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

SIR JOHN LOVERULE, *an honest country gentleman, beloved for his hospitality.*

BUTLER, COOK, FOOTMAN, COACHMAN, } *servants to* SIR JOHN.

JOBSON, *a psalm-singing cobler, tenant to* SIR JOHN.

DOCTOR.

WOMEN.

LADY LOVERULE, *wife to* SIR JOHN, *a proud, canting, brawling, fanatical shrew.*

LUCY, LETTICE, } *her maids.*

NELL, JOBSON'S *wife, an innocent country girl.*

Tenants, servants.

Scene—A country village.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The cobler's house.*

JOBSON *and* NELL.

Nell. PRITHEE, good Jobson, stay with me to-night, and for once make merry at home.

Job. Peace, peace, you jade, and go spin; for, if I lack any thread for my stitching, I will punish you by virtue of my sovereign authority.

Nell. Ay, marry, no doubt of that; whilst you take your swing at the alehouse, spend your substance, get drunk as a beast, then come home like a sot, and use one like a dog.

Job. Nounz! do you prate? Why, how now, brazen-face, do you speak ill of the government? Don't you know, hussy, that I am king in my own house, and that this is treason against my majesty?

Nell. Did ever one hear such stuff! But, I pray you now, Jobson, don't go to the alehouse to-night!

Job. Well, I'll humour you for once; but don't grow saucy upon't; for I am invited by sir John Loverule's butler, and am to be princely drunk with punch, at the hall place; we shall have a bowl large enough to swim in.

Nell. But they say, husband, the new lady will not suffer a stranger to enter her doors; she grudges even a draught of small beer to her own servants;

and several of the tenants have come home with broken heads from her ladyship's own hands, only for smelling strong beer in the house.

Job. A pox on her for a fanatical jade! she has almost distracted the good knight: But she's now abroad, feasting with her relations, and will scarce come home to-night; and we are to have much drink, a fiddle, and merry gambols!

Nell. O dear husband! let me go with you; we'll be as merry as the night's long!

Job. Why, how now, you bold baggage! would you be carried to a company of smooth-faced, eating, drinking, lazy serving-men? no, no, you jade, I'll not be a cuckold.

Nell. I'm sure they would make me welcome; you promised I should see the house, and the family has not been here before, since you married and brought me home.

Job. Why, thou most audacious strumpet, dar'st thou dispute with me, thy lord and master? Get in and spin, or else my strap shall wind about thy ribs most confoundedly.

AIR.—*The Twitcher.*

He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life;
But for her that will scold and will quarrel,
Let him cut her off short
Of her meat and her sport,
And ten times a day hoop her barrel, brave boys!
And ten times a day hoop her barrel.

Nell. Well, we poor women must always be slaves, and never have any joy; but you men run and ramble at your pleasure.

Job. Why, you most pestilent baggage, will you be hooped? Be gone.

Nell. I must obey. [*Going.*

Job. Stay! now I think on't, here's sixpence for you; get ale and apples, stretch and puff thyself up with lamb's-wool, rejoice and revel by thyself, be drunk, and wallow in thy own sty, like a grumbling sow as thou art.

He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life, *&c.* [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—SIR JOHN'S *house.*

BUTLER, COOK, FOOTMAN, COACHMAN, LUCY, LETTICE, *&c.*

But. I would the blind fiddler and our dancing neighbours were here, that we might rejoice a little, while our termagant lady is abroad; I have made a most sovereign bowl of punch.

Lucy. We had need rejoice sometimes, for our devilish new lady will never suffer it in her hearing.

But. I will maintain, there is more mirth in a galley, than in our family: Our master, indeed, is the worthiest gentleman——nothing but sweetness and liberality.

Foot. But here's a house turned topsy-turvy, from heaven to hell, since she came hither.

Lucy. His former lady was all virtue and mildness.

But. Ay, rest her soul, she was so; but this is inspired with a legion of devils, who make her lay about her like a fury.

Lucy. I am sure I always feel her in my bones: if her complexion don't please her, or she looks yellow in a morning, I am sure to look black and blue for it before night.

Cook. Pox on her! I dare not come within her reach. I have some six broken heads already. A lady, quotha! a she-bear is a civiler animal.

Foot. Heaven help my poor master! this devilish termagant scolding woman will be the death of him; I never saw a man so altered all the days of my life.

Cook. There's a perpetual motion in that tongue of hers, and a damned shrill pipe, enough to break the drum of a man's ear.

Enter blind Fiddler, JOBSON, *and neighbours.*

But. Welcome, welcome all; this is our wish! Honest old acquaintance, goodman Jobson! how dost thou?

Job. By my troth, I am always sharp set towards punch, and am now come with a firm resolution, though but a poor cobler, to be as richly drunk as a lord. I am a true English heart, and look upon drunkenness as the best part of the liberty of the subject.

But. Come, Jobson, we'll bring out our bowl of punch in solemn procession; and then for a song to crown our happiness.

[*They all go out, and return with a bowl of punch.*]

AIR.—*Charles of Sweden.*

Come jolly Bacchus, god of wine,
Crown this night with pleasure;
Let none at cares of life repine,
To destroy our pleasure:
Fill up the mighty sparkling bowl,
That every true and loyal soul
May drink and sing without controul,
To support our pleasure.

Thus, mighty Bacchus, shalt thou be
Guardian of our pleasure;
That, under thy protection, we
May enjoy new pleasure.
And as the hours glide away,
We'll, in thy name, invoke their stay,
And sing thy praises, that we may
Live and die with pleasure.

But. The king and the royal family, in a brimmer!—

AIR.

Here's a good health to the king,
And send him a prosperous reign;
O'er hills and high mountains,
We'll drink dry the fountains,
Until the sun rises again, brave boys!
Until the sun rises again.

Then, here's to thee, my boy boon,
And here's to thee, my boy boon;
As we've tarried all day
For to drink down the sun,
So we'll tarry and drink down the moon, brave boys!
So we'll tarry and drink down the moon.

Omnes. Huzza!

Enter SIR JOHN, *and* LADY.

Lady. O Heaven and earth! What's here within my doors? Is hell broke loose? What troops of fiends are here? Sirrah, you impudent rascal, speak!

Sir John. For shame, my dear!——As this is a time of mirth and jollity, it has always been the custom of my house, to give my servants liberty in this season, and to treat my country neighbours, that with innocent sports they may divert themselves.

Lady. I say, meddle with your own affairs: I will govern my own house, without your putting in an oar. Shall I ask leave to correct my own servants?

Sir John. I thought, madam, this had been my house, and these my tenants and servants.

Lady. Did I bring a fortune, to be thus abused, and snubbed before people? Do you call my authority in question, ungrateful man? Look you to your dogs and horses abroad, but it shall be my province to govern here; nor will I be controuled by e'er a hunting, hawking knight in Christendom.

AIR.—*Set by* MR SEEDO.

Sir John. Ye gods! you gave to me a wife,
Out of your grace and favour,
To be the comfort of my life,
And I was glad to have her:
But if your Providence Divine,
For greater bliss design her,
To obey your wills at any time
I am ready to resign her.

This it is to be married to a continual tempest. Strife and noise, canting and hypocrisy, are eternally afloat.—'Tis impossible to bear it long.

Lady. Ye filthy scoundrels, and odious jades! I'll teach you to junket thus, and steal my provisions; I shall be devoured at this rate.

But. I thought, madam, we might be merry once upon a holiday.

Lady. Holiday, you popish cur! Is one day more holy than another? and if it be, you'll be sure to get drunk upon it, you rogue! [*Beats him.*] You minx, yon impudent flirt, are you jigging it after an abominable fiddle? all dancing is whorish, hussy! [*Lugs her by the ears.*

Lucy. O lud! she has pulled off both my ears.

Sir John. Pray, madam, consider your sex and quality! I blush for your behaviour.

Lady. Consider your incapacity; you shall not instruct me. Who are you, thus muffled? you buzzard! [*She beats them all; JOBSON steals by.*

Job. I am an honest, plain, psalm-singing cobbler, madam; if your ladyship would but go to church, you might hear me above all the rest there.

Lady. I'll try thy voice here first, villain! [*Strikes him.*

Job. Nounz! what a pox, what a devil ails you?

Lady. O profane wretch! wicked varlet!

Sir John. For shame! your behaviour is monstrous!

Lady. Was ever poor lady so miserable in a brutish husband as I am? I, that am so pious, and so religious a woman!

Job. [*Sings.*] He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life,
But for her that will scold and will quarrel—
[*Exit* JOB.

Lady. O rogue, scoundrel, villain!

Sir John. Remember modesty.

Lady. I'll rout you all with a vengeance; I'll spoil your squeaking treble.

[*Beats the fiddle about the blind man's head.*

Fid. O murder, murder! I am a dark man; which way shall I get hence? Oh Heaven! she has broke my fiddle, and undone me and my wife and children.

Sir John. Here, poor fellow! take your staff and be gone: There's money to buy you two such; that's your way. [*Exit fiddler.*

Lady. Methinks you are very liberal, sir; must my estate maintain you in your profuseness?

Sir John. Go up to your closet, pray, and compose your mind.

Lady. O wicked man! to bid me pray!

Sir John. A man can't be completely curst, I see, without marriage; but, since there is such a thing as separate maintenance, she shall to-morrow enjoy the benefit of it.

AIR.—*Of all comforts I miscarried.*

Of the states in life so various,
Marriage, sure, is most precarious;
'Tis a maze so strangely winding,
Still we are new mazes finding;

'Tis an action so severe,
That nought but death can set us clear.
Happy's the man, from wedlock free,
Who knows to prize his liberty:
Were man wary
How they marry,
We should not be by half so full of misery.

[*Knocking at the door.*] Here, where are my servants? Must they be frighted from me?—Within there—see who knocks.

Lady. Within there!—Where are my sluts? Ye drabs, ye queans—Lights there!

Enter Servants sneaking, with candles.

But. Sir, it is a doctor that lives ten miles off; he practises physic, and is an astrologer: your worship knows him very well; he is a cunning man, makes almanacks, and can help people to their goods again.

Enter Doctor.

Doc. Sir, I humbly beg your honour's pardon for this unseasonable intrusion; but I am benighted, and 'tis so dark that I can't possibly find my way home; and knowing your worship's hospitality, desire the favour to be harboured under your roof to-night.

Lady. Out of my house, you lewd conjurer, you magician!

Doc. Here's a turn!—Here's a change!—Well, if I have any art, ye shall smart for this. [*Aside.*

Sir John. You see, friend, I am not master of my own house; therefore, to avoid any uneasiness, go down the lane about a quarter of a mile, and you'll see a cobler's cottage; stay there a little, and I'll send my servant to conduct you to a tenant's house, where you'll be well entertained.

Doc. I thank you, sir; I'm your most humble servant.—But, as for your lady there, she shall this night feel my resentment. [*Exit.*

Sir John. Come, madam; you and I must have some conference together.

Lady. Yes, I will have a conference and a reformation, too, in this house, or I'll turn it upside down—I will.

AIR.—*Contented country farmer.*

Sir John. Grant me, ye powers, but this request,
And let who will the world contest;
Convey her to some distant shore,
Where I may ne'er behold her more:
Or let me to some cottage fly,
In freedom's arms to live and die.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Cobler's.*

NELL, *and the Doctor.*

Nell. Pray, sir, mend your draught, if you please; you are very welcome, sir.

Doc. Thank you heartily, good woman, and to requite your civility, I'll tell you your fortune.

Nell. O, pray do, sir; I never had my fortune told me in my life.

Doc. Let me behold the lines of your face.

Nell. I'm afraid, sir, 'tis none of the cleanest; I have been about dirty work all this day.

Doc. Come, come, 'tis a good face; be not ashamed of it; you shall shew it in greater places suddenly.

Nell. O dear sir, I shall be mightily ashamed! I want dacity when I come before great folks.

Doc. You must be confident, and fear nothing; there is much happiness attends you.

Nell. Oh me! this is a rare man! Heaven be thanked!

Doc. To morrow, before sunrise, you shall be the happiest woman in this country.

Nell. How! by to-morrow? alack-a-day! sir, how can that be?

Doc. No more shall you be troubled with a surly husband, that rails at, and straps you.

Nell. Lud! how came he to know that? he must be a conjurer! Indeed my husband is somewhat rugged, and in his cups will beat me, but it is not much. He's an honest pains-taking man, and I let him have his way. Pray, sir, take the other cup of ale.

Doc. I thank you.—Believe me, to-morrow you shall be the richest woman in the hundred, and ride in your own coach.

Nell. O father! you jeer me.

Doc. By my art, I do not. But mark my words; be confident, and bear all out, or worse will follow.

Nell. Never fear, sir, I warrant you———O gemini! a coach!

AIR.—*Send home my long-strayed eyes.*

My swelling heart now leaps for joy,
And riches all my thoughts employ;
No more shall people call me Nell,
Her ladyship will do as well.
Decked in my golden, rich array,
I'll in my chariot roll away,
And shine at ring, at ball, and play.

Enter JOBSON.

Job. Where is this quean? Here, Nell! What a pox, are you drunk with your lamb's-wool?

Nell. O husband! here's the rarest man—he has told me my fortune!

Job. Has he so? and planted my fortune, too! a lusty pair of horns upon my head!—Eh?—Is it not so?

Doc. Thy wife is a virtuous woman, and thou wilt be happy.——

Job. Come out, you hang-dog, you juggler, you cheating, bamboozling villain! must I be cuckolded by such rogues as you are? mackmaticians, and almanack-makers!

Nell. Prithee, peace, husband! we shall be rich, and have a coach of our own.

Job. A coach! a cart, a wheel-barrow, you jade!—By the mackin, she's drunk, bloody drunk, most confoundedly drunk!—Get you to bed, you strumpet. [*Beats her.*

Nell. O, mercy on us! is this a taste of my good fortune?

Doc. You had better not have touched her, you surly rogue.

Job. Out of my house, you villain, or I'll run my awl up to the handle in your body!

Doc. Farewell, you paltry slave!

Job. Get out, you rogue! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Changes to an open country.*

DOCTOR.

AIR.—*The spirit's song in Macbeth.*

My little spirits now appear,
Nadir and Abishog draw near,
The time is short, make no delay,
Then quickly haste, and come away:
Nor moon, nor stars afford their light,
But all is wrapt in gloomy night:
Both men and beasts to rest incline,
And all things favour my design.

Spirits. [*Within.*] Say, master, what is to be done?

Doct. My strict commands be sure attend,
For, ere this night shall have an end,
You must this cobler's wife transform,
And, to the knight's, the like perform:
With all your most specific charms,
Convey each wife to different arms;
Let the delusion be so strong,
That none may know the right from wrong.

Within. { All this we will with care perform,
In thunder, lightning, and a storm.

[*Thunder.*

SCENE V.—*Changes to the cobler's house.* JOBSON *at work. The bed in view.*

Job. What devil has been abroad to-night? I never heard such claps of thunder in my life. I thought my little hovel would have flown away; but now all is clear again, and a fine star-light morning it is. I'll settle myself to work. They say winter's thunder brings summer's wonder.

AIR.—*Charming Sally.*

Of all the trades from east to west,
The cobler's, past contending,
Is like in time to prove the best,
Which every day is mending.
How great his praise who can amend
The soals of all his neighbours,
Nor is unmindful of his end,
But to his last still labours!

Lady. Heyday! what impudent ballad-singing rogue is that, who dares wake me out of my sleep? I'll have you flead, you rascal!

Job. What a pox! does she talk in her sleep? or is she drunk still? [*Sings.*

AIR.—*Now ponder well, ye parents dear.*

In Bath, a wanton wife did dwell,
As Chaucer he did write,
Who wantonly did spend her time
In many a fond delight.
All on a time sore sick she was,
And she at length did die,
And then her soul at paradise
Did knock most mightily.

Lady. Why, villain, rascal, screech-owl! who makest a worse noise than a dog hung in the pales, or a hog in a high wind; where are all my servants? Somebody come, and hamstring this rogue. [*Knocks.*

Job. Why, how now, you brazen queau! You must get drunk with the conjurer, must you? I'll give you money another time to spend in lambs-wool, you saucy jade, shall I?

Lady. Monstrous! I can find no bell to ring. Where are my servants? They shall toss him in a blanket.

Job. Ay, the jade's asleep still; the conjurer told her she should keep her coach, and she is dreaming of her equipage. [*Sings.*

I will come in, in spite, she said,
Of all such churls as thee,
Thou art the cause of all our pain,
Our grief and misery.
Thou first broke the commandement,
In honour of thy wife:
When Adam heard her say these words,
He ran away for life.

Lady. Why, husband! Sir John! will you suffer me to be thus insulted?

Job. Husband! Sir John! what a-pox, has she knighted me? And my name's Zekel too! a good jest, faith!

Lady. Ha! he's gone; he is not in the bed. Heaven! where am I? Foh! what loathsome smells are here? Canvas sheets, and a filthy ragged curtain; a beastly rug, and a flock-bed. Am I awake? or is it all a dream? What rogue is that? Sirrah! Where am I? Who brought me hither? What rascal are you?

Job. This is amazing! I never heard such words from her before. If I take my strap to you, I'll make you know your husband. I'll teach you better manners, you saucy drab!

Lady. Oh, astonishing impudence! You my husband, sirrah? I'll have you hanged, you rogue! I'm a lady. Let me know who has given me a sleeping-draught, and conveyed me hither, you dirty varlet?

Job. A sleeping-draught! yes, you drunken jade; you had a sleeping-draught with-a-pox to you. What, has not your lambs-wool done working yet?

Lady. Where am I? Where has my villainous husband put me? Lucy! Lettice! Where are my queans?

Job. Ha, ha, ha! what, does she call her maids, too? The conjuror has made her mad as well as drunk.

Lady. He talks of conjurors; sure I am bewitched. Ha! what clothes are here? a lindsey-woolsey gown, a calico hood, a red bays petticoat! I am removed from my own house by witchcraft. What must I do? What will become of me? [*Horns wind without.*

Job. Hark! the hunters and the merry horns are abroad. Why, Nell, you lazy jade, 'tis break of day! to work, to work! come and spin, you drab, or I'll tan your hide for you! What-a-pox, must I be at work two hours before you in a morning?

Lady. Why, sirrah, thou impudent villain, dost thou not know me, you rogue?

Job. Know you! yes, I know you well enough, and I'll make you know me before I have done with you.

Lady. I am sir John Loverule's lady; how came I here?

Job. Sir John Loverule's lady! no, Nell; not quite so bad, neither; that damned stingy, fanatic whore, plagues every one that comes near her; the whole country curses her.

Lady. Nay, then, I'll hold no longer; you rogue! you insolent villain! I'll teach you better manners. [*Flings the bedstaff, and other things, at him.*

Job. This is more than ever I saw by her; I never had an ill word from her before. Come, strap, I'll try your mettle; I'll sober you, I warrant you, quean. [*He straps her, she flies at him.*

Lady. I'll pull your throat out; I'll tear out your eyes! I am a lady, sirrah. O murder! murder! Sir John Loverule will hang you for this; murder! murder!

Job. Come, hussy, leave fooling, and come to your spinning, or else I'll lamb you; you ne'er was so lambed since you were an inch long. Take it up, you jade. [*She flings it down, he straps her.*

Lady. Hold, hold! I'll do any thing

Job. Oh! I thought I should bring you to yourself again.

Lady. What shall I do? I can't spin. [*Aside.*

Job. I'll into my stall; 'tis broad day, now. [*Works and sings.*

AIR.—*Come, let us prepare.*

Let matters of state
Disquiet the great,
The cobler has nought to perplex him;
Has nought but his wife
To ruffle his life,
And her he can strap if she vex him.

He's out of the power
Of fortune, that whore,
Since low as can be she has thrust him;
From duns he's secure,
For being so poor,
There's none to be found that will trust him.

Heyday, I think the jade's brain is turned! What, have you forgot to spin, hussy?

Lady. But I have not forgot to run. I'll e'en try my feet; I shall find somebody in the town, sure, that will succour me. [*She runs out.*

Job. What, does she run for it? I'll after her. [*He runs out.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*changes to* SIR JOHN'S *house.*

NELL *in bed.*

Nell. What pleasant dreams I have had to-night! Methought I was in paradise, upon a bed of violets and roses, and the sweetest husband by my side! Ha! bless me, where am I now? What sweets are these? No garden in the spring can equal them: Am I on a bed? The sheets are sarsenet sure! no linen ever was so fine. What a gay, silken robe have I got? O Heaven! I dream! Yet, if this be a dream, I would not wish to wake again. Sure, I died last night, and went to Heaven, and this is it.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Now must I awake an alarm, that will not lie still again till midnight, at soonest; the first greeting, I suppose, will be jade, or whore. Madam! madam!

Nell. O gemini! who's this? What dost say, sweetheart?

Lucy. Sweetheart! Oh lud, sweetheart! the best names I have had these three months from her, have been slut, or whore.——What gown and ruffles will your ladyship wear to-day?

Nell. What does she mean? Ladyship! gown! and ruffles! Sure I am awake: Oh! I remember the cunning man now.

Lucy. Did your ladyship speak?

Nell. Ay, child; I'll wear the same I did yesterday.

Lucy. Mercy upon me!—Child!—Here's a miracle!

Enter LETTICE.

Let. Is my lady awake? Have you had her shoe or her slipper flung at your head yet?

Lucy. Oh no, I'm overjoyed; she's in the kindest humour! go to the bed, and speak to her; now is your time.

Let. Now's my time! what, to have another tooth beat out!——Madam!

Nell. What dost say, my dear?——O father! what would she have!

Let. What work will your ladyship please to have done to-day? Shall I work plain-work, or go to my stitching?

Nell. Work, child! 'tis holiday; no work to-day.

Let. Oh mercy! am I, or she awake? or do we both dream? Here's a blessed change?

Lucy. If it continues, we shall be a happy family.

Let. Your ladyship's chocolate is ready.

Nell. Mercy on me! what's that? Some garment I suppose? [*Aside.*]—Put it on then, sweetheart.

Let. Put it on, madam! I have taken it off; 'tis ready to drink.

Nell. I mean, put it by; I don't care for drinking now.

Enter Cook.

Cook. Now go I like a bear to the stake, to know her scurvy ladyship's commands about dinner. How many rascally names must I be called.

Let. Oh, John Cook! you'll be out of your wits to find my lady in so sweet a temper.

Cook. What a devil! are they all mad?

Lucy. Madam, here's the cook come about dinner.

Nell. Oh! there's a fine cook! He looks like one of your gentlefolks. [*Aside.*]—Indeed, honest man, I'm very hungry now; pray get me a rasher upon the coals, a piece of one milk cheese, and some white bread.

Cook. Hey! what's to do here? my head turns round. Honest man! I looked for rogue or rascal, at least. She's strangely changed in her diet, as well as her humour. [*Aside.*]—I'm afraid, madam, cheese and bacon will sit very heavy on your ladyship's stomach, in a morning. If you please, madam, I'll toss you up a white fricasee of chickens in a trice, madam; or what does your ladyship think of a veal sweetbread?

Nell. E'en what you will, good cook.

Cook. Good cook! good cook! Ah! 'tis a sweet lady!

Enter Butler.

Oh! kiss me, Chip, I am out of my wits: We have the kindest, sweetest lady!

But. You shamming rogue, I think you are out of your wits, all of ye; the maids look merrily, too.

Lucy. Here's the butler, madam, to know your ladyship's orders.

Nell. Oh! pray Mr Butler! let me have some small-beer when my breakfast comes in.

But. Mr Butler! Mr Butler! I shall be turned into stone with amazement! [*Aside.*]—Would not your ladyship rather have a glass of Frontiniac, or Lacryme?

Nell. O dear! what hard names are there! but I must not betray myself. [*Aside.*]—Well, which you please, Mr Butler.

Enter Coachman.

But. Go, get you in, and be rejoiced as I am.

Coach. The cook has been making his game I know not how long. What, do you banter, too?

Lucy. Madam, the coachman.

Coach. I come to know if your ladyship goes out to-day, and which you'll have, the coach or chariot.

Nell. Good lack-a-day! I'll ride in the coach, if you please.

Coach. The sky will fall, that's certain. [*Exit.*

Nell. I can hardly think I am awake yet. How well pleased they all seem to wait upon me! O notable cunning man! My head turns round! I am quite giddy with my own happiness.

AIR.—*What though I am a country lass.*

Though late I was a cobler's wife,
In cottage most obscure-a.
In plain stuff-gown, and short-eared coif,
Hard labour did endure-a:

The scene is changed, I'm altered quite,
And from poor humble Nell-a.
I'll learn to dance, to read, and write,
And from all bear the bell-a. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR JOHN, *meeting his servants.*

But. Oh, sir! here's the rarest news!

Lucy. There never was the like, sir! you'll be overjoyed and amazed.

Sir John. What, are ye mad? What's the matter with ye? How now! here's a new face in my family; what's the meaning of all this?

But. Oh, sir! the family's turned upside down. We are almost distracted; the happiest people!

Lucy. Ay, my lady, sir, my lady.

Sir John. What, is she dead?

But. Dead! Heaven forbid! O! she's the best woman, the sweetest lady!

Sir John. This is astonishing! I must go and inquire into this wonder. If this be true, I shall rejoice indeed.

But. 'Tis true, sir, upon my honour. Long live sir John and my lady! huzza!

Enter NELL.

Nell. I well remember the cunning man warned me to bear all out with confidence, or worse, he said, would follow. I am ashamed, and know not what to do with all this ceremony: I am amazed, and out of my senses. I looked in the

glass, and saw a gay fine thing I knew not; methought my face was not at all like that I have seen at home, in a piece of looking-glass fastened upon the cup-board. But great ladies, they say, have flattering-glasses, that shew them far unlike themselves, whilst poor folks glasses represent them e'en just as they are.

AIR.—*When I was a dame of honour.*

Fine ladies, with an artful grace,
Disguise each native feature;
Whilst flattering glasses shew the face,
As made by art, not nature;
But we poor folks in home-spun grey,
By patch nor washes tainted,
Look fresh and sweeter far than they,
That still are finely painted.

Lucy. O madam! here's my master just returned from hunting.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Nell. O gemini! this fine gentleman my husband!

Sir John. My dear, I am overjoyed to see my family thus transported with exstasy which you occasioned.

Nell. Sir, I shall always be proud to do every thing, that may give you delight, or your family satisfaction.

Sir John. By Heaven, I am charmed! dear creature, if thou continuest thus, I had rather enjoy thee than the Indies. But can this be real? May I believe my senses?

Nell. All that's good above can witness for me, I am in earnest. [*Kneels.*

Sir John. Rise, my dearest! Now am I happy indeed——Where are my friends, my servants? call them all, and let them be witnesses of my happiness. [*Exit.*

Nell. O rare, sweet man! he smells all over like a nosegay. Heaven preserve my wits!

AIR—*'Twas within a furlong, &c.*

Nell. O charming cunning man! thou hast been
wondrous kind,
And all thy golden words do now prove
true, I find;
Ten thousand transports wait,
To crown my happy state,
Thus kissed, and pressed,
And doubly blessed
In all this pomp and state:
New scenes of joy arise,
Which fill me with surprise;
My rock, and reel,
And spinning-wheel,
And husband I despise;
Then Jobson, now adieu,
Thy cobling still pursue,
For hence I will not, cannot, no, nor must not,
buckle to. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—JOBSON'S *house.*

Enter LADY.

Lady. Was ever lady yet so miserable? I can't make one soul in the village acknowledge me; they sure are all of the conspiracy. This wicked husband of mine has laid a devilish plot against me. I must at present submit, that I may hereafter have an opportunity of executing my design. Here comes the rogue; I'll have him strangled; but now I must yield.

Enter JOBSON.

Job. Come on, Nell; art thou come to thyself yet?

Lady. Yes, I thank you, I wonder what I ailed; this cunning man has put powder in my drink, most certainly.

Job. Powder! the brewer put good store of powder of malt in it, that's all. Powder, quoth she! ha, ha, ha!

Lady. I never was so all the days of my life.

Job. Was so! no, nor I hope ne'er will be so again, to put me to the trouble of strapping you so devilishly.

Lady. I'll have that right hand cut off for that, rogue. [*Aside.*]—You was unmerciful to bruise me so.

Job. Well, I'm going to sir John Loverule's; all his tenants are invited; there's to be rare feasting and revelling, and open house kept for three months.

Lady. Husband, shan't I go with you?

Job. What the devil ails thee now? Did I not tell thee but yesterday, I would strap thee for desiring to go, and art thou at it again, with a pox?

Lady. What does the villain mean by strapping, and yesterday?

Job. Why, I have been married but six weeks, and you long to make me a cuckold already. Stay at home, and be hanged! there's good cold pye in the cupboard; but I'll trust thee no more with strong-beer, hussy. [*Exit.*

Lady. Well, I'll not be long after you; sure I shall get some of my own family to know me; they can't be all in this wicked plot. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—SIR JOHN'S.

SIR JOHN *and company enter.*

DUETT.

Sir John. Was ever man possest of
So sweet, so kind a wife!
Nell. Dear sir, you make me proud:
Be you but kind,
And you shall find
All the good I can boast of
Shall end but with my life.
Sir John. Give me thy lips;
Nell. First let me, dear sir, wipe them;

Sir John. Was ever so sweet a wife!
[*Kissing her.*
Nell. Thank you, dear sir!
I vow and protest,
I ne'er was so kissed;
Again, sir!
Sir John. Again, and again, my dearest!
O may it last for life!
What joy thus to enfold thee!
Nell. What pleasure to behold thee!
Inclined again to kiss!
Sir John. How ravishing the bliss!
Nell. I little thought this morning,
'Twould ever come to this.
[*Da Capo.*

Enter LADY.

Lady. Here's a fine rout and rioting! You, sirrah, butler, you rogue!

But. Why, how now! Who are you?

Lady. Impudent varlet! Don't you know your lady?

But. Lady! here, turn this mad woman out of doors!

Lady. You rascal! take that, sirrah!
[*Flings a glass at him.*

Foot. Have a care, hussy! there's a good pump without; we shall cool your courage for you.

Lady. You, Lucy, have you forget me too, you minx?

Lucy. Forgot you, woman! Why, I never remembered you; I never saw you before in my life.

Lady. Oh, the wicked slut! I'll give you cause to remember me, I will, hussy.
[*Pulls her headcloths off.*

Lucy. Murder! Murder! Help!

Sir John. How now! What uproar's this?

Lady. You, Lettice, you slut! Won't you know me, neither?
[*Strikes her.*

Let. Help, help!

Sir John. What's to do there?

But. Why, sir, here's a madwoman calls herself my lady, and is beating and cuffing us all round.

Sir John. [*To* LADY.]—Thou my wife! poor creature! I pity thee! I never saw thee before.

Lady. Then it is in vain to expect redress from thee, thou wicked contriver of all my misery.

Nell. How am I amazed! Can that be I, there in my clothes, that have made all this disturbance? And yet I am here, to my thinking, in these fine clothes. How can this be? I am so confounded and affrighted, that I begin to wish I was with Zekel Jobson again.

Lady. To whom shall I apply myself, or whither can I fly? Heaven! What do I see! Is not that I, yonder, in my gown and petticoat I wore yesterday? How can it be! I cannot be in two places at once.

Sir John. Poor wretch! She's stark mad!

Lady. What, in the devil's name, was I here before I came? Let me look in the glass. Oh Heavens! I am astonished! I don't know myself! If this be I that the glass shews me, I never saw myself before.

Sir John. What incoherent madness is this!

Enter JOBSON.

Lady. There, that's the devil in my likeness, who has robbed me of my countenance. Is he here, too?

Job. Ay, hussy; and here's my strap, you quean.

Nell. O dear! I'm afraid my husband will beat me, that am on t'other side the room, there.

Job. I hope your honours will pardon her; she was drinking with a conjurer last night, and has been mad ever since, and calls herself my lady Loverule.

Sir John. Poor woman! take care of her; do not hurt her, she may be cured of this.

Job. Yes, and please your worship, you shall see me cure her presently. Hussy, do you see this?

Nell. O! pray, Zekel, don't beat me.

Sir John. What says my love? Does she infect thee with madness, too?

Nell. I am not well; pray lead me in.
[*Exeunt* NELL *and maid.*

Job. I beseech your worship don't take it ill of me; she shall never trouble you more.

Sir John. Take her home, and use her kindly.

Lady. What will become of me?
[*Exeunt* JOBSON *and* LADY.

Enter footman.

Foot. Sir, the doctor, who called here last night, desires you will give him leave to speak a word or two with you, upon very earnest business.

Sir John. What can this mean? Bring him in.

Enter DOCTOR.

Doc. Lo! on my knees, sir, I beg forgiveness for what I have done, and put my life into your hands.

Sir John. What mean you?

Doc. I have exercised my magic art upon your lady; I know you have too much honour to take away my life, since I might have still concealed it, had I pleased.

Sir John. You have now brought me to a glimpse of misery too great to bear. Is all my happiness then turned into a vision only?

Doc. Sir, I beg you, fear not; if any harm comes of it, I freely give you leave to hang me.

Sir John. Inform me what you have done.

Doc. I have transformed your lady's face so,

that she seems the cobler's wife, and have charmed her face into the likeness of my lady's; and last night, when the storm arose, my spirits conveyed them to each other's bed.

Sir John. Oh, wretch! thou hast undone me! I am fallen from the height of all my hopes, and must still be curst with a tempestuous wife; a fury whom I never knew quiet since I had her.

Doc. If that be all, I can continue the charm for both their lives.

Sir John. Let the event be what it will, I'll hang you if you do not end the charm this instant.

Doc. I will this minute, sir; and, perhaps, you'll find it the luckiest of your life; I can assure you, your lady will prove the better for it.

Sir John. Hold; there's one material circumstance I'd know.

Doc. Your pleasure, sir?

Sir John. Perhaps the cobler has—you understand me?

Doc. I do assure you, no; for ere she was conveyed to his bed, the cobler was got up to work, and he has done nought but beat her ever since. And you are like to reap the fruits of his labour. He'll be with you in a minute; here he comes.

Enter JOBSON.

Sir John. So, Jobson, where's your wife?

Job. And please your worship, she's here at the door, but, indeed, I thought I had lost her just now; for as she came into the hall, she fell into such a swoon, that I thought she would never come out on't again; but a tweak or two by the nose, and half a dozen straps, did the business at last. Here, where are you, housewife?

Enter LADY.

But. [*Holds up the candle, but lets it fall when he sees her.*]—O heaven and earth! Is this my lady?

Job. What does he say? My wife changed to my lady!

Cook. Ay; I thought the other was too good for our lady.

Lady. [*To* SIR JOHN.]—Sir, you are the person I have most offended, and here I confess I have been the worst of wives in every thing, but that I always kept myself chaste. If you can vouchsafe once more to take me to your bosom, the remainder of my days shall joyfully be spent in duty, and observance of your will.

Sir John. Rise, madam; I do forgive you; and if you are sincere in what you say, you'll make me happier than all the enjoyments in the world, without you, could do.

Job. What a pox! Am I to lose my wife thus?

Enter LUCY *and* LETTICE.

Lucy. Oh, sir! the strangest accident has happened! it has amazed us; my lady was in so great a swoon, we thought she had been dead.

Let. And when she came to herself, she proved another woman.

Job. Ha, ha, ha! A bull, a bull!

Lucy. She is so changed, I knew her not; I never saw her face before: O lud! Is this my lady?

Let. We shall be mauled again.

Lucy. I thought our happiness was too great to last.

Lady. Fear not, my servants. It shall hereafter be my endeavour to make you happy.

Sir John. Persevere in this resolution, and we shall be blest indeed, for life.

Enter NELL.

Nell. My head turns round; I must go home. O Zekel! Are you there!

Job. O lud! Is that fine lady my wife? Egad, I'm afraid to come near her. What can be the meaning of this?

Sir John. This is a happy change, and I'll have it celebrated with all the joy I proclaimed for my late short-lived vision.

Lady. To me, 'tis the happiest day I ever knew.

Sir John. Here, Jobson, take thy fine wife.

Job. But one word, sir. Did not your worship make a buck of me, under the rose?

Sir John. No, upon my honour, nor ever kissed her lips till I came from hunting; but since she has been a means of bringing about this happy change, I'll give thee five hundred pounds home with her; go, buy a stock of leather.

Job. Brave boys! I'm a prince, the prince of coblers. Come hither and kiss me, Nell; I'll never strap thee more.

Nell. Indeed, Zekel, I have been in such a dream, that I'm quite weary of it.—[*To* JOBSON.]—Forsooth, madam, will you please to take your clothes, and let me have mine again?

[*To* LADY LOVERULE.

Job. Hold your tongue, you fool; they'll serve you to go to church. [*Aside.*

Lady. No, thou shalt keep them, and I'll preserve thine as reliques.

Job. And can your ladyship forgive my strapping your honour so very much?

Lady. Most freely. The joy of this blessed change sets all things right again.

Sir John. Let us forget every thing that is past, and think of nothing now but joy and pleasure.

AIR.—*Hey boys, up go we!*

Lady. Let every face with smiles appear,
Be joy in every breast;
Since from a life of pain and care,
We now are truly blest.

Sir John. May no remembrance of past time
Our present pleasures soil;
Be nought but mirth and joy our crime,
And sporting all our toil.
Job. I hope you'll give me leave to speak,
If I may be so bold;
There's nought but the devil, and this good strap,
Could ever tame a scold.

[*Exeunt.*

THE

BEGGAR's OPERA.

BY

GAY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

PEACHUM, *a resetter of stolen goods.*
LOCKIT, *a jailor.*
MACHEATH, *captain of the gang.*
FILCH,
JEMMY TWITCHER,
CROOK-FINGERED JACK,
WAT DREARY,
ROBIN OF BAGSHOT,
NIMMING NED,
HARRY PADDINGTON,
MAT OF THE MINT,
BEN BUDGE,
} *highwaymen.*

WOMEN.

MRS PEACHUM, *wife to* PEACHUM.
POLLY PEACHUM, *daughter to* PEACHUM, *and attached to* MACHEATH.
LUCY LOCKIT, *daughter to* LOCKIT, *and attached to* MACHEATH.
DIANA TRAPES,
MRS COAXER,
DOLLY TRULL,
MRS VIXEN,
BETTY DOXEY,
JENNY DIVER,
MRS SLAMMEKIN,
SUKEY TAWDRY,
MOLLY BRAZEN,
} *women of the town.*

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—PEACHUM's *house.*

PEACHUM *sitting at a table, with a large book of accounts before him.*

AIR.—*An old woman clothed in gray.*

THROUGH all the employments of life,
Each neighbour abuses his brother,
Whore and rogue they call husband and wife;
All professions berogue one another:
The priest calls the lawyer a cheat,
The lawyer beknaves the divine,
And the statesman, because he's so great,
Thinks his trade as honest as mine.

A lawyer's is an honest employment; so is mine: like me, too, he acts in a double capacity, both against rogues and for them; for 'tis but fitting that we should protect and encourage cheats, since we live by them.

Enter FILCH.

Filch. Sir, Black Moll hath sent word her trial comes on in the afternoon; and she hopes you will order matters so as to bring her off.

Peach. Why, she may plead her belly at worst; to my knowledge, she hath taken care of that security: but, as the wench is very active and industrious, you may satisfy her, that I'll soften the evidence.

Filch. Tom Gagg, sir, is found guilty.

Peach. A lazy dog! when I took him the time before, I told him what he would come to if he did not mend his hand—This is death, without reprieve. I may venture to book him [*Writes.*]: for Tom Gagg, forty pounds. Let Betty Sly know, that I'll save her from transportation; for I can get more by her staying in England.

Filch. Betty hath brought more goods into our lock this year, than any five of the gang; and, in truth, 'tis pity to lose so good a customer.

Peach. If none of the gang takes her off, she may, in the common course of business, live a twelvemonth longer. I love to let women 'scape. A good sportsman always lets the hen-partridges fly, because the breed of the game depends upon them. Besides, here the law allows us no reward. There is nothing to be got by the death of women—except our wives.

Filch. Without dispute she is a fine woman! 'twas to her I was obliged for my education. To say a bold word, she hath trained up more young fellows to the business than the gaming-table.

Peach. Truly, Filch, thy observation is right. We, and the surgeons, are more beholden to women than all the profesions besides.

AIR.—*The bonny grey-ey'd morn, &c.*

Filch. 'Tis woman that seduces all mankind;
By her we first were taught the wheedling arts:
Her very eyes can cheat: when most she's kind,
She tricks us of our money, with our hearts!
For her, like wolves, by night we roam for prey,
And practise ev'ry fraud to bribe her charms;
For suits of love, like law, are won by pay,
And beauty must be fee'd into our arms.

Peach. But make haste to Newgate, boy, and let my friends know what I intend: for I love to make them easy one way or other.

Filch. When a gentleman is long kept in suspense, penitence may break his spirit ever after. Besides, certainty gives a man a good air upon his trial, and makes him risk another without fear or scruple. But I'll away; for 'tis a pleasure to be the messenger of comfort to friends in affliction. [*Exit.*

Peach. But it is now high time to look about me for a decent execution against next sessions. I hate a lazy rogue, by whom one can get nothing till he is hanged. A register of the gang. [*Reading.*] Crook-fingered Jack, a year and a half in the service: let me see how much the stock owes to his industry; one, two, three, four, five gold watches, and seven silver ones. A mighty clean-handed fellow! Sixteen snuff-boxes, five of them of true gold; six dozen of handkerchiefs, four silver-hilted swords, half a dozen of shifts, three tie-periwigs, and a piece of broad cloth. Considering these are only fruits of his leisure hours, I don't know a prettier fellow; for no man alive hath a more engaging presence of mind upon the road. Wat Dreary, alias Brown Will; an irregular dog! who hath an underhand way of disposing of his goods. I'll try him only for a sessions or two longer upon his good behaviour. Harry Paddington—a poor petty-larceny rascal, without the least genius! that fellow, though he were to live these six months, will never come to the gallows with any credit! Slippery Sam; he goes off the next sessions; for the villain hath the impudence to have views of following his trade as a tailor, which he calls an honest employment. Mat of the Mint, listed not above a month ago; a promising sturdy fellow, and diligent in his way! somewhat too bold and hasty, and may raise good contributions on the public, if he does not cut himself short by murder. Tom Tipple; a guzzling, soaking sot, who is always too drunk to stand himself, or to make others stand! A cart is absolutely necessary for him. Robin of Bagshot, alias Gorgon, alias Bluff Bob, alias Carbuncle, alias Bob Booty——

Enter MRS PEACHUM.

Mrs Peach. What of Bob Booty, husband? I hope nothing bad hath betided him? You know, my dear, he's a favourite customer of mine; 'twas he made me a present of this ring.

Peach. I have set his name down in the black-list; that's all, my dear! he spends his life among women, and, as soon as his money is gone, one or other of the ladies will hang him for the reward; and there's forty pounds lost to us for ever!

Mrs Peach. You know, my dear, I never meddle in matters of death; I always leave those affairs to you. Women, indeed, are bitter bad judges in these cases; for they are so partial to the brave, that they think every man handsome who is going to the camp or the gallows.

AIR.—*Cold and raw, &c.*

If any wench Venus's girdle wear,
Though she be never so ugly,
Lilies and roses will quickly appear,
And her face look wondrous smuggly.
Beneath the left ear, so fit but a cord,
(A rope so charming a zone is!)
The youth, in his cart, hath the air of a lord,
And we cry, There dies an Adonis!

But really, husband, you should not be too hard-hearted; for you never had a finer, braver set of men, than at present. We have not had a murder among them all these seven months; and, truly, my dear, that is a great blessing.

Peach. What a dickens is the woman always a whimpering about murder for? No gentleman is ever looked upon the worse for killing a man

in his own defence; and, if business cannot be carried on without it, what would you have a gentleman do?

Mrs Peach. If I am in the wrong, my dear, you must excuse me; for nobody can help the frailty of an over scrupulous conscience.

Peach. Murder is as fashionable a crime as a man can be guilty of. How many fine gentlemen have we in Newgate every year, purely upon that article? If they have wherewithal to persuade the jury to bring it in manslaughter, what are they the worse for it? So, my dear, have done upon this subject. Was captain Macheath here this morning for the banknotes he left with you last week?

Mrs Peach. Yes, my dear; and, though the bank hath stopt payment, he was so cheerful, and so agreeable! Sure there is not a finer gentleman upon the road than the captain! If he comes from Bagshot at any reasonable hour, he hath promised to make one this evening with Polly, me, and Bob Booty, at a party at quadrille. Pray, my dear, is the captain rich?

Peach. The captain keeps too good company ever to grow rich. Marybone and the chocolate-houses are his undoing. The man, that proposes to get money by play, should have the education of a fine gentleman, and be trained up to it from his youth.

Mrs Peach. Really I am sorry, upon Polly's account, the captain hath not more discretion. What business hath he to keep company with lords and gentlemen? he should leave them to prey upon one another.

Peach. Upon Polly's account! What a plague does the woman mean? Upon Polly's account!

Mrs Peach. Captain Macheath is very fond of the girl.

Peach. And what then?

Mrs Peach. If I have any skill in the ways of women, I am sure Polly thinks him a very pretty man.

Peach. And what then? you would not be so mad to have the wench marry him? Gamesters and highwaymen are generally very good to their whores, but they are very devils to their wives.

Mrs Peach. But if Polly should be in love, how should we help her, or how can she help herself? Poor girl! I'm in the utmost concern about her.

AIR.—*Why is your faithful slave disdained?*

If love the virgin's heart invade,
How, like a moth, the simple maid
Still plays about the flame!
If soon she be not made a wife,
Her honour's singed, and then for life
She's——what I dare not name.

Peach. Look ye, wife, a handsome wench, in our way of business, is as profitable as at the bar of a Temple coffee-house, who looks upon it as her livelihood to grant every liberty but one. You see I would indulge the girl as far as prudently we can in any thing but marriage: after that, my dear, how shall we be safe? Are we not then in her husband's power? for the husband hath the absolute power over all a wife's secrets but her own. If the girl had the discretion of a court-lady, who can have a dozen of young fellows at her ear, without complying with one, I should not matter it: but Polly is tinder, and a spark will at once set her in a flame. Married! if the wench does not know her own profit, sure she knows her own pleasure better than to make herself a property! My daughter, to me, should be like a court-lady to a minister of state—a key to the whole gang. Married! if the affair is not already done, I'll terrify her from it, by the example of our neighbours.

Mrs Peach. Mayhap, my dear, you may injure the girl: she loves to imitate the fine ladies, and she may only allow the captain liberties in the view of interest.

Peach. But 'tis your duty, my dear, to warn the girl against her ruin, and to instruct her how to make the most of her beauty. I'll go to her this moment, and sift her. In the mean time, wife, rip out the coronets and marks of these dozen of cambric handkerchiefs; for I can dispose of them this afternoon to a chap in the city. [*Exit.*

Mrs Peach. Never was a man more out of the way in an argument than my husband! Why must our Polly, forsooth, differ from her sex, and love only her husband? And why must Polly's marriage, contrary to all observation, make her the less followed by other men? All men are thieves in love, and like a woman the better for being another's property.

AIR.—*Of all the simple things we do, &c.*

A maid is like the golden ore,
Which hath guineas intrinsical in't,
Whose worth is never known before
It is tried and impressed in the mint.
A wife's like a guinea in gold,
Stampt with the name of her spouse:
Now here, now there, is bought or is sold,
And is current in every house.

Enter FILCH.

Come hither, Filch! I am as fond of this child as though my mind misgave me he were my own. He hath as fine a hand at picking a pocket as a woman, and is as nimble-fingered as a juggler. If an unlucky session does not cut the rope of thy life, I pronounce, boy, thou wilt be a great man in history. Where was your post last night, my boy?

Filch. I ply'd at the opera, madam; and, considering 'twas neither dark nor rainy, so that there

was no great hurry in getting chairs and coaches, made a tolerable hand on't. These seven handkerchiefs, madam.

Mrs Peach. Coloured ones, I see. They are of sure sale, from our warehouse at Redriff, among the seamen.

Filch. And this snuff-box.

Mrs Peach. Set in gold! a pretty encouragement this to a young beginner!

Filch. I had a fair tug at a charming gold watch. Pox take the tailors for making the fobs so deep and narrow! It stuck by the way, and I was forced to make my escape under a coach. Really, madam, I fear I shall be cut off in the flower of my youth; so that, every now and then, since I was pumpt, I have thoughts of taking up, and going to sea.

Mrs Peach. You should go to Hockley-in-the-Hole, and to Marybone, child, to learn valour: these are the schools that have bred so many brave men. I thought, boy, by this time, thou hadst lost fear, as well as shame. Poor lad! how little does he know as yet of the Old Bailey! For the first fact I'll ensure thee from being hanged; and going to sea, Filch, will come time enough upon a sentence of transportation. But now, since you have nothing better to do, even go to your book, and learn your catechism; for really a man makes but an ill figure in the Ordinary's paper, who cannot give a satisfactory answer to his questions. But hark you, my lad? don't tell me a lie, for you know I hate a liar; Do you know of any thing that hath past between captain Macheath and our Polly?

Filch. I beg you, madam, don't ask me; for I must either tell a lie to you or to Miss Polly, for I promised her I would not tell.

Mrs Peach. But when the honour of our family is concerned——

Filch. I shall lead a sad life with Miss Polly, if ever she come to know that I told you. Besides, I would not willingly forfeit my own honour, by betraying any body.

Mrs Peach. Yonder comes my husband and Polly. Come, Filch, you shall go with me into my own room, and tell me the whole story. I'll give thee a glass of a most delicious cordial, that I keep for my own drinking. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PEACHUM *and* POLLY.

Polly. I know as well as any of the fine ladies how to make the most of myself, and of my man too. A woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been at court, or at an assembly: we have it in our natures, papa. If I allow captain Macheath some trifling liberties, I have this watch and other visible marks of his favour to shew for it. A girl, who cannot grant some things, and refuse what is most material, will make but a poor hand of her beauty, and soon be thrown upon the common.

AIR.—*What shall I do to shew how much I love her?*

Virgins are like the fair flower in its lustre,
Which in the garden enamels the ground,
Near it the bees in play flutter and cluster,
And gaudy butterflies frolic around;
But when once plucked, 'tis no longer alluring,
To Covent-garden 'tis sent (as yet sweet),
There fades, and shrinks, and grows past all enduring,
Rots, stinks, and dies, and is trod under feet.

Peach. You know, Polly, I am not against your toying and trifling with a customer in the way of business, or to get out a secret or so; but if I find out that you have played the fool, and are married, you jade you, I'll cut your throat, hussy! Now, you know my mind.

Enter MRS PEACHUM.

AIR.—*O London is a fine town.*

MRS PEACHUM [*in a very great passion.*]

Our Polly is a sad slut! nor heeds what we have taught her,
I wonder any man alive will ever rear a daughter!
For she must have both hoods and gowns, and hoops to swell her pride,
With scarfs and stays, and gloves and lace, and she'll have men beside;
And when she's drest with care and cost, all-tempting, fine and gay,
As men should serve a cucumber, she flings herself away.

You baggage! you hussy! you inconsiderate jade! had you been hanged it would not have vexed me, for that might have been your misfortune; but to do such a mad thing by choice! The wench is married, husband!

Peach. Married! the captain is a bold man, and will risk any thing for money: to be sure, he believes her a fortune. Do you think your mother and I should have lived comfortably so long together, if ever we had been married, baggage?

Mrs Peach. I knew she was always a proud slut, and now the wench hath played the fool and married, because, forsooth, she would do like the gentry! Can you support the expence of a husband, hussy, in gaming, drinking, and whoring? have you money enough to carry on the daily quarrels of man and wife, about who shall squander most? There are not many husbands and wives who can bear the charges of plaguing one another in a handsome way. If you must be married, could you introduce nobody into our family but a highwayman? Why, thou foolish jade, thou wilt be as ill used, and as much neglected, as if thou hadst married a lord!

Peach. Let not your anger, my dear, break through the rules of decency; for the captain looks upon himself, in the military capacity, as a gentleman by his profession. Besides what he hath already, I know he is in a fair way of getting, or of dying; and both these ways, let me tell you, are most excellent chances for a wife. Tell me, hussy, are you ruined or no?

Mrs Peach. With Polly's fortune, she might very well have gone off to a person of distinction: yes, that you might, you pouting slut!

Peach. What! is the wench dumb? speak, or I'll make you plead by squeezing out an answer from you. Are you really bound wife to him, or are you only upon liking? [*Pinches her.*

Polly. Oh! [*Screaming.*

Mrs Peach. How the mother is to be pitied, who hath handsome daughters! Locks, bolts, bars, and lectures of morality, are nothing to them; they break through them all: they have as much pleasure in cheating a father and mother, as in cheating at cards.

Peach. Why, Polly, I shall soon know if you are married, by Macheath's keeping from our house.

AIR.—*Grim king of the ghosts, &c.*

Polly. Can love be controuled by advice?
Will Cupid our mothers obey?
Though my heart was as frozen as ice,
At his flame 'twould have melted away.
When he kist me, so sweetly he prest,
'Twas so sweet that I must have complied,
So I thought it both safest and best
To marry, for fear you should chide.

Mrs Peach. Then all the hopes of our family are gone for ever and ever!

Peach. And Macheath may hang his father and mother-in-law, in hopes to get into their daughter's fortune.

Polly. I did not marry him (as 'tis the fashion) coolly and deliberately for honour or money—but I love him.

Mrs Peach. Love him! worse and worse! I thought the girl had been better bred. Oh husband! husband! her folly makes me mad! my head swims! I'm distracted! I can't support myself—Oh! [*Faints.*

Peach. See, wench, to what a condition you have reduced your poor mother! A glass of cordial this instant! How the poor woman takes it to heart! [*Polly goes out, and returns with it.*] Ah, hussy! now this is the only comfort your mother has left.

Polly. Give her another glass, sir; my mamma drinks double the quantity whenever she is out of order. This, you see, fetches her.

Mrs Peach. The girl shews such a readiness, and so much concern, that I could almost find in my heart to forgive her.

AIR.—*O Jenny, O Jenny! where hast thou been?*

O Polly! you might have toyed and kist;
By keeping men off you keep them on:
Polly. But he so teased me,
And he so pleased me,
What I did you must have done.

Mrs Peach. Not with a highwayman—you sorry slut!

Peach. A word with you, wife. 'Tis no new thing for a wench to take a man without consent of parents. You know 'tis the frailty of woman, my dear.

Mrs Peach. Yes, indeed, the sex is frail; but the first time a woman is frail, she should be somewhat nice methinks, for then or never is the time to make her fortune: after that, she hath nothing to do but to guard herself from being found out, and she may do what she pleases.

Peach. Make yourself a little easy; I have a thought shall soon set all matters again to rights. Why so melancholy, Polly? since what is done cannot be undone, we must all endeavour to make the best of it.

Mrs Peach. Well, Polly, as far as one woman can forgive another, I forgive thee. Your father is too fond of you, hussy.

Polly. Then all my sorrows are at an end.

Mrs Peach. A mighty likely speech, in troth, for a wench who is just married!

AIR.—*Thomas, I cannot, &c.*

Polly. I, like a ship, in storms was tost,
Yet afraid to put into land.
For seized in the port the vessel's lost,
Whose treasure is contraband.
The waves are laid,
My duty's paid;
O joy beyond expression!
Thus safe ashore,
I ask no more;
My all's in my possession.

Peach. I hear customers in t'other room; go talk with them, Polly, but come again as soon as they are gone. But hark ye, child? if 'tis the gentleman who was here yesterday about the repeating watch, say, you believe we can't get intelligence of it till to-morrow, for I lent it to Sukey Straddle to make a figure with it to-night at a tavern in Drury-lane. If t'other gentleman calls for the silver-hilted sword, you know beetle-browed Jemmy hath it on, and he doth not come from Tunbridge till Tuesday night; so that it cannot be had till then. [*Exit* POLLY.] Dear wife! be a little pacified; don't let your passion run away with your senses: Polly, I grant you, hath done a rash thing.

Mrs Peach. If she had only an intrigue with the fellow, why the very best families have ex-

cused and huddled up a frailty of that sort. 'Tis marriage, husband, that makes it a blemish.

Peach. But money, wife, is the true fuller's earth for reputations; there is not a spot or a stain but what it can take out. A rich rogue, now-a-days, is fit company for any gentleman; and the world, my dear, hath not such a contempt for roguery as you imagine. I tell you, wife, I can make this match turn to our advantage.

Mrs Peach. I am very sensible, husband, that captain Macheath is worth money; but I am in doubt whether he hath not two or three wives already, and then, if he should die in a session or two, Polly's dower would come into dispute.

Peach. That, indeed, is a point which ought to be considered.

AIR.—*A soldier and a sailor.*

A fox may steal your hens, sir;
A whore your health and pence, sir;
Your daughter rob your chest, sir;
Your wife may steal your rest, sir;
A thief your goods and plate.
But this is all but picking,
With rest, peace, chest, and chicken:
It ever was decreed, sir,
If lawyer's hand is fee'd, sir,
He steals your whole estate.

The lawyers are bitter enemies to those in our ways; they don't care that any body should get a clandestine livelihood but themselves.

Enter POLLY.

Polly. 'Twas only Nimming Ned; he brought in a damask window-curtain, a hoop-petticoat, a pair of silver candlesticks, a periwig, and one silk stocking, from the fire that happened last night.

Peach. There is not a fellow that is cleverer in his way, and saves more goods out of the fire, than Ned. But now, Polly, to your affair; for matters must not be as they are. You are married, then, it seems?

Polly. Yes, sir.

Peach. And how do you propose to live, child?

Polly. Like other women, sir; upon the industry of my husband.

Mrs Peach. What! is the wench turned fool? a highwayman's wife, like a soldier's, hath as little of his pay as his company.

Peach. And had not you the common views of a gentlewoman in your marriage, Polly?

Polly. I don't know what you mean, sir.

Peach. Of a jointure, and of being a widow.

Polly. But I love him, sir; how, then, could I have thoughts of parting with him?

Peach. Parting with him! why that is the whole scheme and intention of all marriage articles. The comfortable estate of widowhood is the only hope that keeps up a wife's spirits.—Where is the woman, who would scruple to be a wife, if she had it in her power to be a widow whenever she pleased? If you have any views of this sort, Polly, I shall think the match not so very unreasonable.

Polly. How I dread to hear your advice! yet I must beg you to explain yourself.

Peach. Secure what he hath got; have him peached the next sessions; and, then, at once, you are made a rich widow.

Polly. What! murder the man I love! the blood runs cold at my heart with the very thought of it!

Peach. Fy, Polly! what hath murder to do in the affair? Since the thing sooner or later must happen, I dare say the captain himself would like that we should get the reward for his death sooner than a stranger. Why, Polly, the captain knows that as 'tis his employment to rob, so it is ours to take robbers; every man in his business: so that there is no malice in the case.

Mrs Peach. Ay, husband, now you have nicked the matter! To have him peached is the only thing could ever make me forgive her.

AIR.—*Now, ponder well, ye parents dear.*

Polly. Oh, ponder well! be not severe;
To save a wretched wife;
For, on the rope, that hangs my dear,
Depends poor Polly's life.

Mrs Peach. But your duty to your parents, hussy, obliges you to hang him. What would many a wife give for such an opportunity!

Polly. What is a jointure? what is widowhood to me? I know my heart; I cannot survive him.

AIR.—*Le printemps rapelle aux armes.*

The turtle thus, with plaintive crying,
Her lover dying,
The turtle thus, with plaintive crying,
Laments her dove;
Down she drops, quite spent with sighing,
Paired in death, as paired in love.

Thus, sir, it will happen to your poor Polly.

Mrs Peach. What! is the fool in love in earnest, then? I hate thee for being particular.—Why, wench, thou art a shame to thy very sex.

Polly. But hear me, mother—if you ever loved——

Mrs Peach. Those cursed play-books she reads have been her ruin! One word more, hussy, and I shall knock your brains out, if you have any.

Peach. Keep out of the way, Polly, for fear

of mischief, and consider of what is proposed to you.

Mrs Peach. Away, hussy! Hang your husband, and be dutiful. [POLLY *listening.*] The thing, husband, must and shall be done. For the sake of intelligence, we must take other measures, and have him peached the next session without her consent. If she will not know her duty, we know ours.

Peach. But really, my dear, it grieves one's heart to take off a great man. When I consider his personal bravery, his fine stratagem, how much we have already got by him, and how much more we may get, methinks I cannot find in my heart to have a hand in his death: I wish you could have made Polly undertake it.

Mrs Peach. But in a case of necessity——our own lives are in danger.

Peach. Then, indeed, we must comply with the customs of the world, and make gratitude give way to interest. He shall be taken off.

Mrs Peach. I'll undertake to manage Polly.

Peach. And I'll prepare matters for the Old Bailey. [*Exeunt* PEACHUM *and* MRS PEACHUM.

Polly. Now, I am a wretch, indeed! Methinks I see him already in the cart, sweeter and more lovely than the nosegay in his hand! I hear the crowd extolling his resolution and intrepidity! What vollies of sighs are sent from the windows of Holborn, that so comely a youth should be brought to disgrace! I see him at the tree! the whole circle are in tears! even butchers weep! Jack Ketch himself hesitates to perform his duty, and would be glad to lose his fee, by a reprieve! What, then, will become of Polly? As yet I may inform him of their design, and aid him in his escape. It shall be so. But then he flies; absents himself, and I bar myself from his dear, dear conversation! that, too, will distract me.—If he keeps out of the way, my papa and mamma may in time relent, and we may be happy.—If he stays, he is hanged, and then he is lost for ever! He intended to lie concealed in my room till the dusk of the evening. If they are abroad, I'll this instant let him out, lest some accident should prevent him.

[*Exit, and returns with* MACHEATH.

AIR.—*Pretty parrot say, &c.*

Mac. Pretty Polly, say
When I was away,
Did your fancy never stray
To some newer lover?
Polly. Without disguise,
Heaving sighs,
Doting eyes,
My constant heart discover.
Fondly let me loll.
Mac. O, pretty, pretty Poll!

Polly. And are you as fond of me as ever, my dear?

Mac. Suspect my honour, my courage; suspect any thing, but my love. May my pistols miss fire, may my mare slip her shoulder while I am pursued, if I ever forsake thee!

Polly. Nay, my dear! I have no reason to doubt you; for I find in the romance you lent me, none of the great heroes were ever false in love.

AIR.—*Pray, fair one, be kind.*

Mac. My heart was so free,
It roved like the bee,
Till Polly my passion requited;
I sipt each flower,
I changed every hour,
But here every flower is united.

Polly. Were you sentenced to transportation, sure, my dear, you could not leave me behind you—could you?

Mac. Is there any power, any force, that could tear me from thee? You might sooner tear a pension out of the hands of a courtier, a fee from a lawyer, a pretty woman from a looking-glass, or any woman from quadrille—But to tear me from thee, is impossible!

AIR.—*Over the hills and far away.*

Mac. Were I laid on Greenland's coast,
And in my arms embraced my lass,
Warm amidst eternal frost,
Too soon the half year's night would pass.
Polly. Were I sold on Indian soil,
Soon as the burning day was closed,
I could mock the sultry toil,
When on my charmer's breast reposed.
Mac. And I would love you all the day,
Polly. Every night would kiss and play,
Mac. If with me you'd fondly stray
Polly. Over the hills and far away!

Polly. Yes, I would go with thee. But, oh! how shall I speak it? I must be torn from thee! We must part!

Mac. How! part!

Polly. We must, we must. My papa and mamma are set against thy life: they now, even now, are in search after thee: they are preparing evidence against thee: thy life depends upon a moment.

AIR.—*Gin thou wert my ain thing.*

Polly. O what pain it is to part!
Can I leave thee, can I leave thee?
O what pain it is to part!
Can thy Polly ever leave thee?

But lest death my love should thwart,
And bring thee to the fatal cart,
Thus I tear thee from my bleeding heart!
Fly hence and let me leave thee!

One kiss, and then——one kiss——Begone——Farewell!

Mac. My hand, my heart, my dear, are so riveted to thine, that I cannot loose my hold.

Polly. But my papa may intercept thee, and then I should lose the very glimmering of hope. A few weeks, perhaps, may reconcile us all.—Shall thy Polly hear from thee?

Mac. Must I, then, go?

Polly. And will not absence change your love?

Mac. If you doubt it, let me stay———and be hanged.

Polly. O, how I fear! how I tremble! Go—but when safety will give you leave, you will be sure to see me again! for, till then, Polly is wretched.

AIR.—*O the broom, &c.*

[*Parting, and looking back at each other with fondness, he at one door, she at the other.*

Mac. The miser thus a shilling sees,
Which he's obliged to pay,
With sighs resigns it by degrees,
And fears 'tis gone for aye.
Polly. The boy thus, when his sparrow's flown,
The bird in silence eyes,
But soon as out of sight 'tis gone,
Whines, whimpers, sobs, and cries.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A tavern near Newgate.*

JEMMY TWITCHER, CROOK-FINGER'D JACK, WAT DREARY, ROBIN OF BAGSHOT, NIMMING NED, HARRY PADDINGTON, MAT OF THE MINT, BEN BUDGE, *and the rest of the gang, at the table, with wine, brandy, and tobacco.*

Ben. BUT, prithee, Mat, what is become of thy brother Tom? I have not seen him since my return from transportation.

Mat. Poor brother Tom had an accident this time twelvemonth, and so clever made a fellow he was, that I could not save him from those flaying rascals the surgeons, and now, poor man, he is among the otamys' at Surgeons'-hall.

Ben. So, it seems his time was come.

Jem. But the present time is ours, and nobody alive hath more. Why are the laws levelled at us? Are we more dishonest than the rest of mankind? What we win, gentlemen, is our own, by the law of arms, and the right of conquest.

Crook. Where shall we find such another set of practical philosophers, who, to a man, are above the fear of death?

Wat. Sound men and true!

Rob. Of tried courage, and indefatigable industry!

Ned. Who is there, here, that would not die for his friend?

Har. Who is there, here, that would betray him for his interest?

Mat. Shew me a gang of courtiers that can say as much.

Ben. We are for a just partition of the world; for every man hath a right to enjoy life.

Mat. We retrench the superfluities of mankind. The world is avaricious, and I hate avarice. A covetous fellow, like a jackdaw, steals what he was never made to enjoy, for the sake of hiding it. These are the robbers of mankind; for money was made for the free-hearted and generous: and where is the injury of taking from another what he hath not the heart to make use of?

Jem. Our several stations for the day are fixed. Good luck attend us all! Fill the glasses.

AIR.—*Fill every glass, &c.*

Mat. Fill every glass, for wine inspires us,
And fires us
With courage, love, and joy.
Women and wine should life employ;
Is there aught else on earth desirous?
Chorus. Fill every glass, &c.

Enter MACHEATH.

Mac. Gentlemen, well met: my heart hath been with you this hour, but an unexpected affair hath detained me. No ceremony, I beg you.

Mat. We were just breaking up to go upon duty. Am I to have the honour of taking the air with you, sir, this evening upon the heath? I drink a dram now and then with the stage coachmen, in the way of friendship and intelligence; and I know, that about this time, there will be passengers upon the western road who are worth speaking with.

Mac. I was to have been of that party——but———

Mat. But what, sir?

Mac. Is there any man who suspects my courage?

Mat. We have all been witnesses of it.

Mac. My honour and truth to the gang?

Mat. I'll be answerable for it.

Mac. In the division of our booty, have I ever shewn the least marks of avarice or injustice?

Mat. By these questions something seems to have ruffled you. Are any of us suspected?

Mac. I have a fixed confidence, gentlemen, in you all as men of honour, and, as such, I value and respect you; Peachum is a man that is useful to us.

Mat. Is he about to shew us any foul play? I'll shoot him through the head.

Mac. I beg you, gentlemen, act with conduct and discretion. A pistol is your last resort.

Mat. He knows nothing of this meeting.

Mac. Business cannot go on without him: he is a man who knows the world, and is a necessary agent to us. We have had a slight difference, and, till it is accommodated, I shall be obliged to keep out of his way. Any private dispute of mine shall be of no ill consequence to my friends. You must continue to act under his direction; for, the moment we break loose from him, our gang is ruined.

Mat. As a bawd to a whore, I grant you, he is, to us, of great convenience.

Mac. Make him believe I have quitted the gang, which I can never do but with life. At our private quarters, I will continue to meet you. A week or so, will probably reconcile us.

Mat. Your instructions shall be observed.—'Tis now high time for us to repair to our several duties; so, till the evening, at our quarters in Moorfields, we bid you farewell.

Mac. I shall wish myself with you. Success attend you!

[*Sits down melancholy at the table.*

AIR.—*March in* RINALDO, *with drums and trumpets.*

Mat. Let us take the road.
Hark! I hear the sound of coaches,
The hour of attack approaches,
To your arms, brave boys, and load!
See the ball I hold!
Let the chemists toil like asses,
Our fire their fire surpasses,
And turns all our lead to gold.

[*The gang, ranged in the front of the stage, load their pistols, and stick them under their girdles; then go off, singing the first part in chorus.*

Mac. What a fool is a fond wench! Polly is most confoundedly bit. I love the sex; and a man, who loves money, might as well be contented with one guinea, as I with one woman. The town, perhaps, hath been as much obliged to me for recruiting it with free-hearted ladies, as to any recruiting officer in the army. If it were not for us and the other gentlemen of the sword, Drury-lane would be uninhabited.

AIR.—*Would you have a young virgin, &c.*

If the heart of a man is depressed with cares,
The mist is dispelled, when a woman appears;
Like the notes of a fiddle she sweetly, sweetly
Raises the spirits, and charms our ears.
Roses and lilies her cheeks disclose,
But her ripe lips are more sweet than those;
Press her,
Caress her;
With blisses
Her kisses
Dissolve us in pleasure and soft repose.

I must have women! There is nothing unbends the mind like them: money is not so strong a cordial for the time—Drawer!

Enter DRAWER.

Is the porter gone for all the ladies, according to my directions?

Draw. I expect him back every minute; but you know, sir, you sent him as far as Hockley-in-the-Hole for three of the ladies, for one in Vinegar-yard, and for the rest of them somewhere about Lewkner's-lane. Sure, some of them are below, for I hear the bar-bell. As they come, I will shew them up. Coming, coming!

[*Exit* DRAWER.

Enter MRS COAXER, DOLLY TRULL, MRS VIXEN, BETTY DOXY, JENNY DIVER, MRS SLAMMEKIN, SUKY TAWDRY, *and* MOLLY BRAZEN.

Mac. Dear Mrs Coaxer! you are welcome; you look charmingly to-day: I hope you don't want the repairs of quality, and lay on paint?—Dolly Trull! kiss me, you slut! are you as amorous as ever, hussy? you are always so taken up with stealing hearts, that you don't allow yourself time to steal any thing else: ah, Dolly! thou wilt ever be a coquette.—Mrs Vixen! I'm your's; I always loved a woman of wit and spirit; they make charming mistresses, but plaguy wives.—Betty Doxy! come hither, hussy! do you drink as hard as ever? you had better stick to good wholesome beer; for, in troth, Betty, strong waters will in time ruin your constitution: you should leave those to your betters.—What, and my pretty Jenny Diver, too! as prim and demure as ever! there is not any prude, though ever so high bred, hath a more sanctified look, with a more mischievous heart; ah, thou art a dear, artful hypocrite!——Mrs Slammekin! as careless and genteel as ever: all you fine ladies, who know your own beauty, affect an undress.—But see! here's Suky Tawdry come to contradict what I

was saying; every thing she gets one way, she lays out upon her back: why, Sukey, you must keep at least a dozen tallymen.—Molly Brazen! [*She kisses him.*] that's well done! I love a free-hearted wench: thou hast a most agreeable assurance, girl, and art as willing as a turtle.—— But hark! I hear music: the harper is at the door. If music be the food of love, play on. Ere you seat yourselves, ladies, what think you of a dance? Come in!

Enter HARPER.

Play the French tune that Mrs Slammekin was so fond of. [*A dance a la ronde, in the French manner; near the end of it this song and chorus.*]

AIR.—*Cotillon.*

Youth's the season made for joys,
Love is then our duty,
She, alone, who that employs,
Well deserves her beauty.
Let's be gay
While we may,
Beauty's a flower despised in decay.

CHORUS.—*Youth's the season*, &c.

Let us drink and sport to day,
Ours is not to morrow;
Love with youth flies swift away,
Age is nought but sorrow.
Dance and sing,
Time's on the wing,
Life never knows the return of spring.

CHORUS.—*Let us drink*, &c.

Mac. Now, pray, ladies, take your places. Here, fellow. [*Pays the harper.*] Bid the drawer brings us more wine. [*Exit harper.*] If any of the ladies chuse gin, I hope they will be so free to call for it.

Jen. You look as if you meant me. Wine is strong enough for me. Indeed, sir, I never drink strong waters, but when I have the colic.

Mac. Just the excuse of the fine ladies! why, a lady of quality is never without the colic. I hope, Mrs Coaxer, you have had good success of late in your visits among the mercers?

Coax. We have so many interlopers; yet, with industry, one may still have a little picking. I carried a silver-flowered lutestring, and a piece of black padesoy, to Mr Peachum's lock, but last week.

Vix. There's Molly Brazen hath the ogle of a rattlesnake: she rivetted a linen-draper's eyes so fast upon her, that he was nicked of three pieces of cambric before he could look off.

Braz. Oh, dear madam!——But sure nothing can come up to your handling of laces; and, then, you have such a sweet deluding tongue! To cheat a man is nothing; but the woman must have fine parts, indeed, who cheats a woman.

Vix. Lace, madam, lies in a small compass, and is of easy conveyance. But you are apt, madam, to think too well of your friends.

Coax. If any woman hath more art than another, to be sure it is Jenny Diver: though her fellow be never so agreeable, she can pick his pocket as coolly as if money were her only pleasure. Now, that is a command of the passions uncommon in a woman.

Jen. I never go to the tavern with a man, but in the view of business. I have other hours, and other sort of men for my pleasure: but, had I your address, madam———

Mac. Have done with your compliments, ladies, and drink about. You are not so fond of me, Jenny, as you used to be.

Jen. 'Tis not convenient, sir, to shew my fondness among so many rivals. 'Tis your own choice, and not the warmth of my inclination, that will determine you.

AIR.—*All in a misty morning.*

Before the barn-door, crowing,
The cock by hens attended,
His eyes around him throwing,
Stands for a while suspended;
Then, one he singles from the crew,
And cheers the happy hen,
With how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you agen?

Mac. Ah Jenny! thou art a dear slut!

Trul. Pray, madam, were you ever in keeping?

Tawd. I hope, madam, I have not been so long upon the town but I have met with some good fortune as well as my neighbours.

Trull. Pardon me, madam; I meant no harm by the question; 'twas only in the way of conversation.

Tawd. Indeed, madam, if I had not been a fool, I might have lived very handsomely with my last friend; but, upon his missing five guineas, he turned me off. Now, I never suspected he had counted them.

Slam. Who do you look upon, madam, as your best sort of keepers?

Trull. That, madam, is thereafter as they be.

Slam. I, madam, was once kept by a Jew, and, bating their religion, to women they are a good sort of people.

Tawd. Now, for my part, I own I like an old fellow; for we always make them pay for what they cannot do.

Vix. A spruce 'prentice, let me tell you, ladies, is no ill thing; they bleed freely: I have sent at least two or three dozen of them, in my time, to the plantations.

Jen. But to be sure, sir, with so much good

fortune as you have had upon the road, you must be grown immensely rich?

Mac. The road, indeed, hath done me justice, but the gaming-table hath been my ruin.

AIR.—*When once I lay with another man's wife, &c.*

Jen. The gamesters and lawyers are jugglers alike,
If they meddle, your all is in danger;
Like gypsies, if once they can finger a souse,
Your pockets they pick, and they pilfer your house,
And give your estate to a stranger.

A man of courage should never put any thing to the risk but his life. These are the tools of a man of honour: cards and dice are only fit for cowardly cheats, who prey upon their friends.

[*She takes up one pistol,* TAWDRY *takes up the other.*

Tawd. This, sir, is fitter for your hand. Besides your loss of money, 'tis a loss to the ladies. Gaming takes you off from women. How fond could I be of you! but, before company, 'tis ill bred.

Mac. Wanton hussies!

Jen. I must, and will have a kiss, to give my wine a zest.

[*They take him about the neck, and make signs to* PEACHUM *and constables, who rush in upon him.*

Peach. I seize you, sir, as my prisoner.

Mac. Was this well done, Jenny?—Women are decoy-ducks; who can trust them? beasts, jades, jilts, harpies, furies, whores!

Peach. Your case, Mr Macheath, is not particular. The greatest heroes have been ruined by women. But, to do them justice, I must own they are pretty sort of creatures, if we could trust them. You must now, sir, take your leave of the ladies; and, if they have a mind to make you a visit, they will be sure to find you at home. This gentleman, ladies, lodges in Newgate. Constables, wait upon the captain to his lodgings.

AIR.—*When first I laid siege to my Chloris.*

Mac. At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure,
At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure;
Let me go where I will,
In all kinds of ill,
I shall find no such furies as these are.

Peach. Ladies, I'll take care the reckoning shall be discharged.

[*Exit* MACHEATH, *guarded, with* PEACHUM *and constables; the women remain.*]

Vix. Look ye, Mrs Jenny; though Mr Peachum may have made a private bargain with you and Sukey Tawdry for betraying the captain, as we were all asssisting, we ought all to share alike.

Coax. I think Mr Peachum, after so long an acquaintance, might have trusted me as well as Jenny Diver.

Slam. I am sure at least three men of his hanging, and in a year's time, too, (if he did me justice) should be set down to my account.

Trull. Mrs Slammekin, that is not fair, for you know one of them was taken in bed with me.

Jen. As for a bowl of punch or a treat, I believe Mrs Sukey will join with me: as for any thing else, ladies, you cannot in conscience expect it.

Slam. Dear madam———

Trull. I would not for the world———

Slam. 'Tis impossible for me———

Trull. As I hope to be saved, madam———

Slam. Nay, then, I must stay here all night—

Trull. Since you command me———

[*Exeunt with great ceremony.*

SCENE II.—*Newgate.*

Enter LOCKIT, *Turnkeys,* MACHEATH, *and Constables.*

Lock. Noble captain! you are welcome; you have not been a lodger of mine this year and half. You know the custom, sir: garnish, captain, garnish. Hand me down those fetters there.

Mac. Those, Mr Lockit, seem to be the heaviest of the whole set. With your leave I should like the further pair better.

Lock. Look ye, captain, we know what is fittest for our prisoners. When a gentleman uses me with civility, I always do the best I can to please him. Hand them down, I say. We have them of all prices, from one guinea to ten; and 'tis fitting every gentleman should please himself.

Mac. I understand you, sir. [*Gives money.*]—The fees here are so many and so exorbitant, that few fortunes can bear the expence of getting off handsomely, or of dying like a gentleman.

Lock. Those I see will fit the captain better. Take down the further pair. Do but examine them, sir. Never was better work; how genteelly they are made! They will sit as easy as a glove, and the nicest man in England might not be ashamed to wear them.—[*He puts on the chains.*]—If I had the best gentleman in the land in my custody, I could not equip him more handsomely. And so, sir—I now leave you to your private meditations.

[*Exeunt* LOCKIT, *turnkeys, and constables.*

AIR.—*Courtiers, courtiers, think it no harm.*

Mac. Man may escape from rope and gun,
Nay, some have outlived the doctor's pill;

Who takes a woman must be undone,
That basilisk is sure to kill.
The fly that sips treacle is lost in the sweets,
So he that tastes woman, woman, woman,
He that tastes woman, ruin meets.

To what a woeful plight have I brought myself! Here must I (all day long till I am hanged) be confined to hear the reproaches of a wench, who lays her ruin at my door. I am in the custody of her father; and, to be sure, if he knows of the matter, I shall have a fine time on't betwixt this and my execution. But I promised the wench marriage. What signifies a promise to a woman? Does not man, in marriage itself, promise a hundred things that he never means to perform? Do all we can, women will believe us; for they look upon a promise as an excuse for following their own inclinations—But here comes Lucy, and I cannot get from her—would I were deaf!

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. You base man, you! How can you look me in the face after what hath past between us? See here, perfidious wretch! How I am forced to bear about the load of infamy you have laid upon me! Oh, Macheath! Thou hast robbed me of my quiet—to see thee tortured, would give me pleasure.

AIR.—*A lovely lass to a friar came.*

Thus, when a good huswife sees a rat
In her trap in the morning taken,
With pleasure her heart goes pit a pat,
In revenge for her loss of bacon;
Then she throws him
To the dog or cat
To be worried, crushed, and shaken.

Mac. Have you no bowels, no tenderness, my dear Lucy! to see a husband in these circumstances?

Lucy. A husband!

Mac. In every respect but the form; and that, my dear, may be said over us at any time. Friends should not insist upon ceremonies. From a man of honour, his word is as good as his bond.

Lucy. 'Tis the pleasure of all you fine men to insult the women you have ruined.

AIR.—*'Twas when the sea was roaring.*

How cruel are the traitors,
Who lie and swear in jest;
To cheat unguarded creatures
Of virtue, fame, and rest!
Whoever steals a shilling,
Through shame the guilt conceals;
In love, the perjured villain,
With boasts, the theft reveals.

Mac. The very first opportunity, my dear, (have but patience) you shall be my wife, in whatever manner you please.

Lucy. Insinuating monster! And so you think I know nothing of the affair of Miss Polly Peachum?—I could tear thy eyes out!

Mac. Sure, Lucy, you cannot be such a fool as to be jealous of Polly?

Lucy. Are you not married to her, you brute you?

Mac. Married! Very good! The wench gives it out only to vex thee, and to ruin me in thy good opinion. 'Tis true, I go to the house; I chat with the girl; I kiss her; I say a thousand things to her (as all gentlemen do that mean nothing) to divert myself; and now the silly jade hath set it about that I am married to her, to let me know what she would be at. Indeed, my dear Lucy, these violent passions may be of ill consequence to a woman in your condition.

Lucy. Come, come, captain; for all your assurance, you know that Miss Polly hath put it out of your power to do me the justice you promised me.

Mac. A jealous woman believes every thing her passion suggests. To convince you of my sincerity, if we can find the ordinary, I shall have no scruples of making you my wife; and I know the consequence of having two at a time.

Lucy. That you are only to be hanged, and so get rid of them both.

Mac. I am ready, my dear Lucy, to give you satisfaction—if you think there is any in marriage. What can a man of honour say more?

Lucy. So, then, it seems you are not married to Miss Polly?

Mac. You know, Lucy, the girl is prodigiously conceited: no man can say a civil thing to her, but (like other fine ladies) her vanity makes her think he's her own for ever and ever.

AIR.—*The sun had loosed his weary teams.*

The first time at the looking glass
The mother sets her daughter,
The image strikes the smiling lass
With self-love ever after:
Each time she looks, she, fonder grown,
Thinks every charm grows stronger,
But alas, vain maid! all eyes but your own
Can see you are not younger.

When women consider their own beauties, they are all alike unreasonable in their demands, for they expect their lovers should like them as long as they like themselves.

Lucy. Yonder is my father—Perhaps this way we may light upon the ordinary, who shall try if you will be as good as your word——for I long to be made an honest woman. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PEACHUM *and* LOCKIT, *with an account-book.*

Lock. In this last affair, brother Peachum, we are agreed. You have consented to go halves in Macheath?

Peach. We shall never fall out about an execution.—But as to that article, pray how stands our last year's account?

Lock. If you will run your eye over it, you'll find 'tis fair and clearly stated.

Peach. This long arrear of the government, is very hard upon us. Can it be expected that we should hang our acquaintance for nothing, when our betters will hardly save theirs, without being paid for it? Unless the people in employment pay better, I promise them, for the future, I shall let other rogues live besides their own.

Lock. Perhaps, brother, they are afraid these matters may be carried too far. We are treated too by them with contempt, as if our profession were not reputable.

Peach. In one respect indeed, our employment may be reckoned dishonest, because, like great statesmen, we encourage those who betray their friends.

Lock. Such language, brother, any where else, might turn to your prejudice. Learn to be more guarded, I beg you.

AIR.—*How happy are we, &c.*

When you censure the age,
Be cautious and sage,
Lest the courtiers offended should be;
If you mention vice or bribe,
'Tis so pat to all the tribe,
Each cries——That was levell'd at me.

Peach. Here's poor Ned Clincher's name, I see: sure, brother Lockit, there was a little unfair proceeding in Ned's case; for he told me, in the condemned hold, that, for value received, you had promised him a session or two longer without molestation.

Lock. Mr Peachum—this is the first time my honour was ever called in question.

Peach. Business is at an end—if once we act dishonourably.

Lock. Who accuses me?

Peach. You are warm, brother.

Lock. He that attacks my honour, attacks my livelihood—And this usage—Sir—is not to be borne.

Peach. Since you provoke me to speak—I must tell you too, that Mrs Coaxer charges you with defrauding her of her information-money, for the apprehending of Curl-pated Hugh. Indeed, indeed, brother, we must punctually pay our spies, or we shall have no information.

Lock. Is this language to me, sirrah!—who have sav'd you from the gallows, sirrah?

[*Collaring each other.*

Peach. If I am hanged, it shall be for ridding the world of an arrant rascal.

Lock. This hand shall do the office of the halter you deserve, and throttle you—you dog!——

Peach. Brother, brother!—we are both in the wrong—we shall be both losers in the dispute—for you know, we have it in our power to hang each other. You should not be so passionate.

Lock. Nor you so provoking.

Peach. 'Tis our mutual interest—'tis for the interest of the world, we should agree—If I said any thing, brother, to the prejudice of your character, I ask pardon.

Lock. Brother Peachum—I can forgive, as well as resent—Give me your hand: suspicion does not become a friend.

Peach. I only meant to give you occasion to justify yourself. But I must now step home, for I expect the gentleman about this snuff-box, that Filch nimmed two nights ago in the Park. I appointed him at this hour. [*Exit.*

Enter LUCY.

Lock. Whence come you, hussy?

Lucy. My tears might answer that question.

Lock. You have been whimpering and fondling like a spaniel, over the fellow that hath abused you.

Lucy. One can't help love; one can't cure it. 'Tis not in my power to obey you, and hate him.

Lock. Learn to bear your husband's death like a reasonable woman: 'tis not the fashion now-a-days so much as to affect sorrow upon these occasions. No woman would ever marry, if she had not the chance of mortality for a release. Act like a woman of spirit, hussy, and thank your father for what he is doing.

AIR.—*Of a noble race was Shenkin.*

Lucy. Is, then, his fate decreed, sir?
Such a man can I think of quitting?
When first we met so moves me yet,
Oh! see how my heart is splitting.

Lock. Look ye, Lucy—there's no saving him—so I think you must even do like other widows—buy yourself weeds, and be cheerful.

AIR.

You'll think, ere many days ensue,
This sentence not severe;
I hang your husband, child, 'tis true,
But with him hang your care.
Twang dang dillo dee!

Like a good wife, go moan over your dying husband: that, child, is your duty.—Consider, girl, you can't have the man and the money too—so make yourself as easy as you can, by getting all you can from him. [*Exit.*

Enter MACHEATH.

Lucy. Though the ordinary was out of the way to-day, I hope, my dear, you will, upon the first opportunity, quiet my scruples. Oh, sir, my father's hard heart is not to be softened, and I am in the utmost despair!

Mac. But if I could raise a small sum—would not twenty guineas, think you, move him?—Of all the arguments, in the way of business, the perquisite is the most prevailing.—Your father's perquisites, for the escape of prisoners, must amount to a considerable sum in the year. Money, well timed, and properly applied, will do any thing.

AIR.—*London ladies.*

If you, at an office, solicit your due,
And would not have matters neglected,
You must quicken the clerk with the perquisite, too,
To do what his duty directed.
Or would you the frowns of a lady prevent,
She, too, has this palpable failing;
The perquisite softens her into consent:
That reason with all is prevailing.

Lucy. What love or money can do, shall be done; for all my comfort depends upon your safety.

Enter POLLY.

Polly. Where is my dear husband?—Was a rope ever intended for this neck! Oh, let me throw my arms about it, and throttle thee with love!—Why dost thou turn away from me? 'Tis thy Polly—'tis thy wife!

Mac. Was ever such an unfortunate rascal as I am!

Lucy. Was there ever such another villain!

Polly. Oh, Macheath! was it for this we parted? Taken! imprisoned! tried! hanged! Cruel reflection! I'll stay with thee till death—no force shall tear thy dear wife from thee now. What means my love?—not one kind word! not one kind look! Think what thy Polly suffers to see thee in this condition!

AIR.—*All in the Downs,* &c.

Thus, when the swallow, seeking prey,
Within the sash is closely pent,
His consort, with bemoaning lay,
Without sits pining for the event;
Her chattering lovers all around her skim;
She heeds them not (poor bird!), her soul's with him.

Mac. I must disown her [*Aside.*]. The wench is distracted!

Lucy. Am I then bilked of my virtue? Can I have no reparation? Sure men were born to lie, and women to believe them! Oh, villain, villain!

Polly. Am I not thy wife?—Thy neglect of me, thy aversion to me, too severely proves it.—Look on me—Tell me, am I not thy wife?

Lucy. Perfidious wretch!

Polly. Barbarous husband!

Lucy. Hadst thou been hanged five months ago, I had been happy!

Polly. And I, too.—If you had been kind to me till death, it would not have vexed me—and that's no very unreasonable request (though from a wife), to a man who hath not above seven or eight days to live.

Lucy. Art thou, then, married to another? Hast thou two wives, monster?

Mac. If womens' tongues can cease for an answer—hear me.

Lucy. I won't.—Flesh and blood cannot bear my usage.

Polly. Shall I not claim my own?—Justice bids me speak?

AIR.—*Have you heard of a frolicsome ditty?*

Mac. How happy could I be with either,
Were t'other dear charmer away!
But while you thus tease me together,
To neither a word will I say,
But tol de rol, &c.

Polly. Sure, my dear! there ought to be some preference shewn to a wife; at least she may claim the appearance of it. He must be distracted with his misfortunes, or he could not use me thus.

Lucy. Oh, villain, villain! thou hast deceived me! I could even inform against thee with pleasure. Not a prude wishes more heartily to have facts against her intimate acquaintance, than I now wish to have facts against thee. I would have her satisfaction, and they should all out.

AIR.—*Irish trot.*

Polly. I'm bubbled!
Lucy. I'm bubbled!
Polly. Oh, how I am troubled!
Lucy. Bamboozled and bit!
Polly. My distresses are doubled!
Lucy. When you come to the tree, should the hangman refuse,
These fingers, with pleasure, could fasten the noose.
Polly. I'm bubbled, &c.

Mac. Be pacified, my dear Lucy! this is all a fetch of Polly's, to make me desperate with you in case I get off. If I am hanged, she would fain

have the credit of being thought my widow.—— Really, Polly, this is no time for a dispute of this sort; for whenever you are talking of marriage, I am thinking of hanging.

Polly. And hast thou the heart to persist in disowning me?

Mac. And hast thou the heart to persist in persuading me that I am married? Why, Polly, dost thou seek to aggravate my misfortunes?

Lucy. Really, Miss Peachum, you but expose yourself: besides, 'tis barbarous in you to worry a gentleman in his circumstances.

AIR.

Polly. Cease your funning,
Force or cunning,
Never shall my heart trepan:
All these sallies
Are but malice,
To seduce my constant man.
'Tis most certain,
By their flirting,
Women oft have envy shown:
Pleased to ruin
Others' wooing,
Never happy in their own!

Decency, madam, methinks, might teach you to behave yourself with some reserve with the husband, while his wife is present.

Mac. But seriously, Polly, this is carrying the joke a little too far.

Lucy. If you are determined, madam, to raise a disturbance in the prison, I shall be obliged to send for the turnkey to shew you the door. I am sorry, madam, you force me to be so ill-bred.

Polly. Give me leave to tell you, madam, these forward airs don't become you in the least, madam; and my duty, madam, obliges me to stay with my husband, madam.

AIR.—*Good-morrow, gossip Joan.*

Lucy. Why, how now, Madam Flirt?
If you thus must chatter,
And are for flinging dirt,
Let's try who best can spatter,
Madam Flirt!

Polly. Why, how now, saucy jade?
Sure the wench is tipsy!
How can you see me made [*To him.*
The scoff of such a gipsy?
Saucy jade! [*To her.*

Enter PEACHUM.

Peach. Where's my wench? Ah, hussy, hussy! Come you home, you slut! and, when your fellow is hanged, hang yourself, to make your family some amends.

Polly. Dear, dear father! do not tear me from him. I must speak; I have more to say to him. Oh, twist thy fetters about me, that he may not haul me from thee!

Peach. Sure all women are alike! if ever they commit one folly, they are sure to commit another, by exposing themselves.—Away! not a word more!—You are my prisoner now, hussy!

AIR.—*Irish howl.*

Polly. No power on earth can e'er divide
The knot, that sacred love hath tied!
When parents draw against our mind,
The true-love's knot they faster bind.
Oh, oh ray, oh Amborah—Oh, oh, &c.
[*Holding* MACHEATH, PEACHUM *pulling her.—Exeunt* PEACHUM and POLLY.

Mac. I am naturally compassionate, wife, so that I could not use the wench as she deserved, which made you at first suspect there was something in what she said.

Lucy. Indeed, my dear! I was strangely puzzled.

Mac. If that had been the case, her father would never have brought me into this circumstance—No, Lucy, I had rather die than be false to thee.

Lucy. How happy am I, if you say this from your heart! for I love thee so, that I could sooner bear to see thee hanged, than in the arms of another.

Mac. But couldst thou bear to see me hanged?

Lucy. Oh, Macheath! I can never live to see that day.

Mac. You see, Lucy, in the account of love, you are in my debt; and you must now be convinced, that I rather chuse to die, than be another's. Make me, if possible, love thee more, and let me owe my life to thee. If you refuse to assist me, Peachum and your father will immediately put me beyond all means of escape.

Lucy. My father, I know, hath been drinking hard with the prisoners; and, I fancy, he is now taking his nap in his own room. If I can procure the keys, shall I go off with thee, my dear?

Mac. If we are together, 'twill be impossible to lie concealed. As soon as the search begins to be a little cool, I will send to thee—till then, my heart is thy prisoner.

Lucy. Come, then, my dear husband! owe thy life to me—and, though you love me not—be grateful———But that Polly runs in my head strangely.

Mac. A moment of time may make us unhappy for ever.

AIR.—*The lass of Patie's mill.*

Lucy. I, like the fox, shall grieve,
Whose mate hath left her side,

Whom hounds, from morn to eve,
Chase o'er the country wide.
Where can my lover hide,
Where cheat the wary pack?
If love be not his guide,
He never will come back. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Newgate.*

Enter LOCKIT *and* LUCY.

Lock. To be sure, wench, you must have been aiding and abetting to help him to his escape.

Lucy. Sir, here hath been Peachum and his daughter Polly; and, to be sure, they know the ways of Newgate as well as if they had been born and bred in the place all their lives. Why must all your suspicion light upon me?

Lock. Lucy, Lucy! I will have none of these shuffling answers.

Lucy. Well, then—if I know any thing of him, I wish I may be burnt!

Lock. Keep your temper, Lucy, or I shall pronounce you guilty.

Lucy. Keep your's, sir——I do wish I may be burnt, I do—And what can I say more to convince you?

Lock. Did he tip handsomely?——how much did he come down with? Come, hussy, don't cheat your father, and I shall not be angry with you—Perhaps you have made a better bargain with him, than I could have done—How much, my good girl?

Lucy. You know, sir, I am fond of him, and would have given money to have kept him with me.

Lock. Ah, Lucy! thy education might have put thee more upon thy guard; for a girl, in the bar of an alehouse, is always besieged.

Lucy. Dear sir! mention not my education—for 'twas to that I owe my ruin.

AIR.—*If love's a sweet passion*, &c.

When young at the bar you first taught me to score,
And bid me be free of my lips, and no more,
I was kissed by the parson, the squire, and the sot;
When the guest was departed, the kiss was forgot:
But his kiss was so sweet, and so closely he prest,
That I languished and pined till I granted the rest.

If you can forgive me, sir, I will make a fair confession; for, to be sure, he hath been a most barbarous villain to me.

Lock. And so you have let him escape, hussy! Have you?

Lucy. When a woman loves, a kind look, a tender word, can persuade her to any thing——and I could ask no other bribe.

Lock. Thou wilt always be a vulgar slut!—Lucy—if you would not be looked upon as a fool, you should never do any thing but upon the footing of interest: those that act otherwise are their own bubbles.

Lucy. But love, sir, is a misfortune that may happen to the most discreet woman; and, in love, we are all fools alike.—Notwithstanding all he swore, I am now fully convinced that Polly Peachum is actually his wife.——Did I let him escape (fool that I was!) to go to her?—Polly will wheedle herself into his money, and then Peachum will hang him, and cheat us both.

Lock. So I am to be ruined, because, forsooth, you must be in love?—A very pretty excuse!

Lucy. I could murder that impudent, happy strumpet—I gave him his life, and that creature enjoys the sweets of it—Ungrateful Macheath!

AIR.—*South Sea ballad.*

My love is all madness and folly;
Alone I lie,
Toss, tumble, and cry,
What a happy creature is Polly!
Was e'er such a wretch as I!
With rage I redden like scarlet,
That my dear inconstant varlet,
Stark blind to my charms,
Is lost in the arms
Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!
Stark blind to my charms,
Is lost in the arms
Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!
This, this my resentment alarms.

Lock. And so, after all this mischief, I must stay here to be entertained with your caterwauling, Mistress Puss!——Out of my sight wanton strumpet! you shall fast and mortify yourself into reason, with now and then a little handsome discipline to bring you to your senses.——Go! [*Exit* LUCY.] Peachum then intends to outwit me in this affair; but I'll be even with him.——The dog is leaky in his liquor, so I'll ply him that way, get the secret from him, and turn this affair to my own advantage.——Peachum is my companion, my friend——According to the custom of the world, indeed, he may quote thousands of precedents for cheating me——and shall not I make use of the privilege of friendship, to make him a return?

AIR.—*Packington's pound.*

Thus, gamesters united in friendship are found,
Tho' they know that their industry all is a cheat;
They flock to their prey at the dice-box's sound,
And join to promote one another's deceit:
But if by mishap
They fall of a chap,
To keep in their hands they each other entrap;

Like pikes, lank with hunger, who miss of their ends,
They bite their companions, and prey on their friends:

Now, Peachum, you and I, like honest tradesmen, are to have a fair trial, which of us two can over-reach the other.—Lucy——[*Enter* Lucy.] Are there any of Peachum's people now in the house?

Lucy. Filch, sir, is drinking a quartern of strong waters in the next room with Black Moll.

Lock. Bid him come to me. [*Exit* Lucy.

Enter Filch.

Why, boy, thou lookest as if thou wert half-starved, like a shotten herring. But, boy, can'st thou tell me where thy master is to be found?

Filch. At his lock, sir, at The Crooked Billet.

Lock. Very well—I have nothing more with you. [*Exit* Filch.] I'll go to him there, for I have many important affairs to settle with him, and in the way of those transactions I'll artfully get into his secret—so that Macheath shall not remain a day longer out of my clutches. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A gaming-house.*

Macheath *in a fine tarnished coat,* Ben Budge, Mat *of the* Mint.

Mac. I am sorry, gentlemen, the road was so barren of money. When my friends are in difficulties, I am always glad, that my fortune can be serviceable to them. [*Gives them money.*] You see, gentlemen, I am not a mere court-friend, who professes every thing, and will do nothing.

AIR.—*Lillibullero.*

The modes of the court so common are grown,
That a true friend can hardly be met;
Friendship for interest is but a loan,
Which they let out for what they can get:
'Tis true, you find
Some friends so kind,
Who will give you good counsel themselves to defend,
In sorrowful ditty
They promise, they pity,
But shift you, for money, from friend to friend.

But we, gentlemen, have still honour enough to break through the corruptions of the world—and, while I can serve you, you may command me.

Ben. It grieves my heart, that so generous a man should be involved in such difficulties as oblige him to live with such ill company, and herd with gamesters.

Mat. See the partiality of mankind!—One man may steal a horse, better than another look over a hedge.—Of all mechanics, of all servile handicraftsmen, a gamester is the vilest: but yet, as many of the quality are of the profession, he is admitted amongst the politest company. I wonder we are not more respected!

Mac. There will be deep play to-night at Marybone, and consequently, money may be picked up upon the road. Meet me there, and I'll give you the hint who is worth setting.

Mat. The fellow with a brown coat, with a narrow gold binding, I am told is never without money.

Mac. What do you mean, Mat? Sure you will not think of meddling with him! he's a good honest kind of a fellow, and one of us.

Ben. To be sure, sir, we will put ourselves under your direction.

Mac. Have an eye upon the money-lenders—A rouleau or two would prove a pretty sort of an expedition. I hate extortion.

Mat. Those rouleaus are very pretty things—I hate your bank-bills; there is such a hazard in putting them off.

Mac. There is a certain man of distinction, who, in his time, hath nicked me out of a great deal of the ready: he is in my cash, Ben——I'll point him out to you this evening, and you shall draw upon him for the debt—The company are met; I hear the dice-box in the other room; so, gentlemen, your servant. You'll meet me at Marybone?

Mat. Upon honour. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Peachum's *lock. A table, with wine, brandy, pipes, and tobacco.*

Enter Peachum, *and* Lockit.

Lock. The coronation-account, brother Peachum, is of so intricate a nature, that I believe it will never be settled.

Peach. It consists, indeed, of a great variety of articles—It was worth to our people, in fees of different kinds, above ten instalments. But, brother, it is impossible for us now to enter upon this affair—we should have the whole day before us—Besides, the account of the last half-year's plate is in a book by itself, which lies at the other office.

Lock. Bring us, then, more liquor—To-day shall be for pleasure—to-morrow for business.—Ah, brother! those daughters of ours are two slippery hussies——Keep a watchful eye upon Polly; and Macheath, in a day or two, shall be our own again.

AIR.—*Down in the North country.*

Lock. What gudgeons are we men!
Every woman's easy prey;
Though we have felt the hook, again
We bite, and they betray.

The bird that hath been trapt,
When he hears his calling mate,
To her he flies; again he's clapt
Within the wiry grate.

Peach. But what signifies catching the bird, if your daughter Lucy will set open the door of the cage?

Lock. If men were answerable for the follies and frailties of their wives and daughters, no friends could keep a good correspondence together for two days—This is unkind of you, brother, for among good friends, what they say or do goes for nothing.

Enter FILCH.

Fil. Sir, here's Mrs Diana Trapes wants to speak with you.

Peach. Shall we admit her, brother Lockit?

Lock. By all means———she's a good customer, and a fine spoken woman—and a woman, who drinks and talks so freely, will enliven the conversation.

Peach. Desire her to walk in. [*Exit* FILCH.

Enter MRS TRAPES.

Dear Mrs Dye! your servant—one may know by your kiss, that your gin is excellent.

Trapes. I was always very curious in my liquors.

Lock. There is no perfumed breath like it—I have been long acquainted with the flavour of those lips—han't I, Mrs Dye?

Trapes. Fill it up—I take as large draughts of liquor, as I did of love—I hate a flincher in either.

AIR.—*A shepherd kept sheep, &c.*

In the days of my youth I could bill like a dove, fa, la, la, &c.
Like a sparrow at all times was ready for love, fa, la, la, &c.
The life of all mortals in kissing should pass,
Lip to lip while we're young, then the lip to the glass, fa, la, &c.

But now, Mr Peachum, to our business. If you have blacks of any kind brought in of late, mantuas—velvet scarfs—petticoats—let it be what it will——I am your chap—for all my ladies are very fond of mourning.

Peach. Why look ye, Mrs Dye—you deal so hard with us, that we can afford to give the gentlemen, who venture their lives for the goods, little or nothing.

Trapes. The hard times oblige me to go very near in my dealing—To be sure, of late years, I have been a great sufferer by the Parliament—three thousand pounds would hardly make me amends—The act for destroying the Mint, was a severe cut upon our business——till then, if a customer stept out of the way—we knew where to have her:——No doubt, you know Mrs Coaxer—There's a wench now (till to-day) with a good suit of clothes of mine upon her back, and I could never set eyes upon her for three months together.———Since the act, too, against imprisonment for small sums, my loss there too hath been very considerable; and it must be so, when a lady can borrow a handsome petticoat or a clean gown, and I not have the least hauk upon her; and of my conscience, now-a-days, most ladies take delight in cheating, when they can do it with safety!

Peach. Madam, you had a handsome gold watch of us the other day for seven guineas—Considering we must have our profit———to a gentleman upon the road a gold watch will be scarce worth the taking.

Trapes. Consider, Mr Peachum, that watch was remarkable, and not of very safe sale. If you have any black velvet scarfs—they are a handsome winter wear, and take with most gentlemen, who deal with my customers———'Tis I that put the ladies upon a good foot: 'tis not youth or beauty that fixes their price; the gentlemen always pay according to their dress, from half-a-crown to two guineas, and yet those hussies make nothing of bilking of me—Then, too, allowing for accidents—I have eleven fine customers now down under the surgeon's hand——— what with fees and other expences, there are great goings-out and no comings-in, and not a farthing to pay for at least a month's cloathing—We run great risks—great risks, indeed.

Peach. As I remember, you said something just now of Mrs Coaxer.

Trapes. Yes, sir; to be sure I stripped her of a suit of my own clothes about two hours ago, and have left her, as she should be, in her shift, with a lover of her's, at my house. She called him up stairs, as he was going to Marybone in a hackney-coach—and, I hope, for her own sake and mine, she will persuade the captain to redeem her, for the captain is very generous to the ladies.

Lock. What captain?

Trapes. He thought I did not know him—an intimate acquaintance of your's, Mr Peachum—only captain Macheath—as fine as a lord.

Peach. To-morrow, dear Mrs Dye! you shall set your own price upon any of the goods you like———We have at least half a dozen velvet scarfs, and all at your service. Will you give me leave to make you a present of this suit of night-clothes for your own wearing? But are you sure it is captain Macheath!

Trapes. Though he thinks I have forgot him, nobody knows him better. I have taken a great deal of the captain's money in my time at second-hand, for he always loved to have his ladies well dressed.

Peach. Mr Lockit and I have a little business

with the captain———you understand me?—and we will satisfy you for Mrs Coaxer's debt.

Lock. Depend upon it——we will deal like men of honour.

Trapes. I don't inquire after your affairs—so whatever happens, I wash my hands on't——It hath always been my maxim, that one friend should assist another————But, if you please, I'll take one of the scarfs home with me; 'tis always good to have something in hand.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Newgate.*

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Jealousy, rage, love, and fear, are at once tearing me to pieces. How I am weather-beaten and shattered with distresses!

AIR.—*One evening having lost my way.*

I'm like a skiff on the ocean tost,
Now high, now low, with each billow borne,
With her rudder broke, and her anchor lost,
Deserted and all forlorn:
While thus I lie rolling and tossing all night,
That Polly lies sporting on seas of delight!
Revenge, revenge, revenge,
Shall appease my restless sprite!

I have the ratsbane ready———I run no risk, for I can lay her death upon the gin, and so many die of that naturally, that I shall never be called in question——But say I were to be hanged————I never could be hanged for any thing that would give me greater comfort than the poisoning that slut.

Enter FILCH.

Filch. Madam, here's Miss Polly come to wait upon you.

Lucy. Shew her in.

Enter POLLY.

Polly. Dear madam! your servant. I hope you will pardon my passion—when I was so happy to see you last—I was so over-run with the spleen, that I was perfectly out of myself; and really when one hath the spleen, every thing is to be excused by a friend.

AIR.—*Now, Roger, I'll tell thee, because thou art my son.*

When a wife's in her pout
(As she is sometimes, no doubt)
The good husband, as meek as a lamb,
Her vapours to still
First grants her her will,
And the quieting draught is a dram;
Poor man! and the quieting draught is a dram.

———I wish all our quarrels might have so comfortable a reconciliation.

Polly. I have no excuse for my own behaviour, madam, but my misfortunes—and really, madam, I suffer too upon your account.

Lucy. But, Miss Polly—in the way of friendship, will you give me leave to propose a glass of cordial to you?

Polly. Strong waters are apt to give me the head-ache. I hope, madam, you will excuse me.

Lucy. Not the greatest lady in the land could have better in her closet for her own private drinking—You seem mighty low in spirits, my dear!

Polly. I am sorry, madam, my health will not allow me to accept of your offer—I should not have left you in the rude manner I did, when we met last, madam, had not my papa hauled me away so unexpectedly—I was, indeed, somewhat provoked, and perhaps might use some expressions, that were disrespectful—but really, madam, the captain treated me with so much contempt and cruelty, that I deserved your pity rather than your resentment.

Lucy. But since his escape, no doubt all matters are made up again—Ah, Polly! Polly! 'tis I am the unhappy wife, and he loves you, as if you were only his mistress.

Polly. Sure, madam, you cannot think me so happy as to be the object of your jealousy?—A man is always afraid of a woman, who loves him too well—so that I must expect to be neglected and avoided.

Lucy. Then our cases, my dear Polly, are exactly alike: both of us, indeed, have been too fond.

AIR.—*O, Bessy Bell, &c.*

Polly. A curse attends that woman's love,
Who always would be pleasing.
Lucy. The pertness of the billing dove,
Like tickling is but teasing.
Polly. What, then, in love can woman do?
Lucy. If we grow fond, they shun us,
Polly. And when we fly them they pursue,
Lucy. But leave us when they've won us.

Lucy. Love is so very whimsical in both sexes, that it is impossible to be lasting—but my heart is particular, and contradicts my own observation.

Polly. But really, mistress Lucy, by his last behaviour, I think I ought to envy you—When I was forced from him, he did not shew the least tenderness—but, perhaps, he hath a heart not capable of it.

AIR.—*Would fate to me Belinda give.*

Among the men coquettes we find
Who court, by-turns, all womankind,

And we grant all their hearts desired,
When they are flattered and admired.

The coquettes of both sexes are self lovers, and that is a love no other whatever can dispossess.—I fear, my dear Lucy, our husband is one of those.

Lucy. Away with these melancholy reflections!—Indeed, my dear Polly, we are both of us a cup too low: let me prevail upon you to accept of my offer,

AIR.—*Come, sweet lass.*

Come, sweet lass!
Let's banish sorrow
Till to-morrow;
Come, sweet lass!
Let's take a chirping glass,
Wine can clear
The vapours of despair,
And make us light as air;
Then drink, and banish care.

I can't bear, child, to see you in such low spirits——and I must persuade you to what I know will do you good———I shall now soon be even with the hypocritical strumpet. [*Aside.*] [*Exit.*

Polly. All this wheedling of Lucy can't be for nothing—at this time too, when I know she hates me!—The dissembling of a woman is always the forerunner of mischief—By pouring strong waters down my throat, she thinks to pump some secrets out of me—I'll be upon my guard, and won't taste a drop of her liquor, I'm resolved.

Enter LUCY, *with strong waters.*

Lucy. Come, Miss Polly.

Polly. Indeed, child, you have given yourself trouble to no purpose—You must, my dear, excuse me.

Lucy. Really, Miss Polly, you are as squeamishly affected about taking a cup of strong waters, as a lady before company. I vow, Polly, I shall take it monstrously ill, if you refuse me—Brandy and men (though women love them never so well) are always taken by us with some reluctance—unless 'tis in private.

Polly. I protest, Madam, it goes against me——What do I see! Macheath again in custody!—now every glimmering of happiness is lost! [*Drops the glass of liquor on the ground.*

Lucy. Since things are thus, I'm glad the wench hath escaped; for, by this event, 'tis plain she was not happy enough to deserve to be poisoned. [*Aside.*

Enter LOCKIT, MACHEATH, *and* PEACHUM.

Lock. Set your heart at rest, captain——You have neither the chance of love or money for another escape, for you are ordered to be called down upon your trial immediately.

Peach. Away, hussies! this is not a time for a man to be hampered with his wives—you see the gentleman is in chains already.

Lucy. O husband, husband! my heart longed to see thee, but to see thee thus, distracts me!

Polly. Will not my dear husband look upon his Polly? Why hadst thou not flown to me for protection? with me thou hadst been safe.

AIR.—*The last time I came o'er the moor.*

Polly. Hither, dear husband! turn your eyes.
Lucy. Bestow one glance to cheer me.
Polly. Think with that look thy Polly dies.
Lucy. O shun me not, but hear me.
Polly. 'Tis Polly sues.
Lucy. 'Tis Lucy speaks.
Polly. Is thus true love requited?
Lucy. My heart is bursting.
Polly. Mine too breaks.
Lucy. Must I,
Polly. Must I be slighted?

Mac. What would you have me say, ladies?—You see this affair will soon be at an end, without my disobliging either of you.

Peach. But the settling this point, captain, might prevent a law-suit between your two widows.

AIR.—*Tom Tinker's my true love, &c.*

Mac. Which way shall I turn me?—how can I decide?
Wives, the day of our death, are as fond as a bride.
One wife is too much for most husbands to hear,
But two at a time there's no mortal can bear,
This way, and that way, and which way I will,
What would comfort the one, t' other wife would take ill.

Polly. But if his own misfortunes have made him insensible to mine——a father, sure, will be more compassionate———Dear, dear sir! sink the material evidence, and bring him off at his trial——Polly, upon her knees, begs it of you.

AIR.—*I am a poor shepherd undone.*

When my hero in court appears,
And stands arraigned for his life,
Then think of your Polly's tears,
For, ah! poor Polly's his wife.
Like the sailor he holds up his hand,
Distrest on the dashing wave;
To die a dry death at land
Is as bad as a wat'ry grave.

And alas, poor Polly!
Alack, and well-a-day!
Before I was in love,
Oh! ev'ry month was May.

Lucy. If Peachum's heart is hardened, sure you, sir, will have more compassion on a daughter———I know the evidence is in your power ———How then can you be a tyrant to me!
[*Kneeling.*

AIR.—*Ianthe the lovely, &c.*

When he holds up his hand arraigned for his life,
O, think of your daughter, and think I'm his wife!
What are cannons or bombs, or clashing of swords:
For death is more certain by witnesses' words:
Then nail up their lips, that dread thunder allay,
And each month of my life will hereafter be May.

Lock. Macheath's time is come, Lucy——We know our own affairs; therefore, let us have no more whimpering or whining.

AIR.—*A cobler there was, &c.*

Ourselves, like the great, to secure a retreat,
When matters require it, must give up our gang;
And good reason why,
Or instead of the fry,
Even Peachum and I,
Like poor petty rascals might hang, hang,
Like poor petty rascals might hang!

Peach. Set your heart at rest, Polly—your husband is to die to-day——therefore, if you are not already provided, 'tis high time to look about for another. There's comfort for you, you slut.

Lock. We are ready, sir, to conduct you to Old Bailey.

AIR.—*Bonny Dundee.*

Mac. The charge is prepared, the lawyers are met,
The judges all ranged (a terrible show!)
I go undismayed—for death is a debt,
A debt on demand—so take what I owe.
Then, farewell my love!—dear charmers, adieu!
Contented I die—'tis the better for you.
Here ends all dispute the rest of our lives,
For this way at once I please all my wives.

Now, gentlemen, I am ready to attend you.
[*Exeunt* PEACHUM, LOCKIT, *and* MACHEATH.

Polly. Follow them, Filch, to the court, and when the trial is over, bring me a particular account of his behaviour, and of every thing that happened———You'll find me here with Miss Lucy. [*Exit* FILCH.] But why is all this musick?

Lucy. The prisoners, whose trials are put off till next session, are diverting themselves.

Polly. Sure there is nothing so charming as music! I'm fond of it to distraction—But, alas! —now all mirth seems an insult upon my affliction.—Let us retire, my dear Lucy! and indulge our sorrows—The noisy crew, you see, are coming upon us. [*Exeunt.*

A dance of prisoners in chains, &c.

SCENE IV.—*The condemned hold.* MACHEATH *in a melancholy posture.*

AIR.—*Happy groves.*

O cruel, cruel, cruel case!
Must I suffer this disgrace?

AIR.—*Of all the girls that are so smart:*

Of all the friends in time of grief,
When threat'ning Death looks grimmer,
Not one so sure can bring relief
At this best friend, a brimmer. [*Drinks.*

AIR.—*Britons strike home!*

Since I must swing—I scorn, I scorn to wince or whine. [*Rises.*

AIR.—*Chevy chase.*

But now again my spirits sink,
I'll raise them high with wine.
[*Drinks a glass of wine.*

AIR.—*To old Sir Simon the king.*

But valour the stronger grows
The stronger liquor we're drinking,
And how can we feel our woes
When we have lost the trouble of thinking?
[*Drinks.*

AIR.—*Joy to great Cæsar.*

If thus—a man can die,
Much bolder with brandy.
[*Pours out a bumper of brandy.*

AIR.—*There was an old woman, &c.*

So I drink off this bumper——and now I can stand the test,

And my comrades shall see that I die as brave as the best. [*Drinks.*

AIR.—*Did you ever hear of a gallant sailor?*

But can I leave my pretty hussies,
Without one tear or tender sigh?

AIR.—*Why are mine eyes still flowing?*

Their eyes, their lips, their busses,
Recal my love—Ah! must I die!

AIR.—*Green Sleeves.*

Since laws were made for every degree,
To curb vice in others, as well as in me,
I wonder we ha'n't better company
Upon Tyburn tree!
But gold from law can take out the sting,
And if rich men like us were to swing,
'Twould thin the land such numbers to string
Upon Tyburn tree!

Jail. Some friends of yours, captain, desire to be admitted—I leave you together.

[*Exit Jailor.*

Enter BEN BUDGE *and* MAT *of the* MINT.

Mac. For my having broke prison, you see, gentlemen, I am ordered for immediate execution—The sheriff's officers, I believe, are now at the door——That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me, I own surprised me—'Tis a plain proof, that the world is all alike, and that even our gang can no more trust one another than other people; therefore, I beg you, gentlemen, look well to yourselves, for, in all probability, you may live some months longer.

Mat. We are heartily sorry, captain, for your misfortunes—but 'tis what we must all come to.

Mac. Peachum and Lockit, you know, are infamous scoundrels: their lives are as much in your power, as yours are in theirs——Remember your dying friend——'tis my last request——Bring those villains to the gallows before you, and I am satisfied.

Mat. We'll do't.

Re-enter Jailor.

Jail. Miss Polly and Miss Lucy entreat a word with you.

Mac. Gentlemen, adieu!

[*Exeunt* BEN BUDGE *and* MAT *of the* MINT.

Enter LUCY *and* POLLY.

Mac. My dear Lucy! my dear Polly! whatsoever hath past between us, is now at an end—If you are fond of marrying again, the best advice I can give you is, to ship yourselves off for the West Indies, where you'll have a fair chance of getting a husband a-piece, or, by good luck, two or three, as you like best.

Polly. How can I support this sight!

Lucy. There is nothing moves one so much as a great man in distress!

AIR.—*All you that must take a leap.*

Lucy. Would I might be hanged!
Polly. And I would so too!
Lucy. To be hanged with you!
Polly. My dear, with you!
Mac. O leave me to thought! I fear! I doubt! I tremble! I droop!—See, my courage is out!

[*Turns up the empty bottle.*

Lucy. No token of love?
Polly. Adieu!
Lucy. Farewell!
Mac. But hark! I hear the toll of the bell!

Jail. Four women more, captain, with a child a-piece. See, here they come.

Enter Women and Children.

Mac. What! four wives more!—this is too much—Here—tell the sheriff's officers I am ready. [*Exeunt.*

Enter BEGGAR *and* PLAYER.

Play. But, honest friend, I hope you don't intend that Macheath shall be really executed?

Beg. Most certainly, sir: to make the piece perfect, I was for doing strict poetical justice. Macheath is to be hanged; and, for the other personages of the drama, the audience must suppose they were all either hanged or transported.

Play. Why then, friend, this is a downright deep tragedy. The catastrophe is manifestly wrong; for an opera must end happily.

Beg. Your objection is very just, and is easily removed; for you must allow, that, in this kind of drama, 'tis no matter how absurdly things are brought about: so you rabble there—run and cry, A Reprieve!—Let the prisoner be brought back to his wives in triumph.

Play. All this we must do to comply with the taste of the town.

Beg. Through the whole piece you may observe such a similitude of manners in high and low life, that it is difficult to determine whether, in the fashionable vices, the fine gentlemen imitate the gentlemen of the road, or the gentlemen of the road the fine gentlemen. Had the play remained as I at first intended, it would have carried a most excellent moral; 'twould have shewn, that the lower sort of people have their vices in a degree as well as the rich, and that they are punished for them.

Re-enter MACHEATH, *with rabble, &c. bawling a Reprieve!*

Mac. So, it seems, I am not left to my choice, but must have a wife at last—— Look ye, my dears, we will have no controversy now. Let us give this day to mirth, and I am sure she, who thinks herself my wife, will testify her joy by a dance.

All. Come, a dance, a dance!

Mac. Ladies, I hope you will give me leave to present a partner to each of you; and (if I may without offence) for this time I take Polly for mine—and for life, you slut, for we were really married—As for the rest—But at present keep your own secret. [*To Polly.*

[*A dance.*]

AIR.—*Lumps of pudding, &c.*

Thus I stand, like a Turk, with his doxies around,
From all sides their glances his passion confound,
For black, brown, and fair, his inconstancy burns,
And the different beauties subdue him by turns.
Each calls forth her charms to provoke his desires,
Though willing to all, with but one he retires.
Then think of this maxim, and put off all sorrow,
The wretch of to-day may be happy to-morrow.

Chorus. Then think of this maxim, &c.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

THE

INTRIGUING CHAMBERMAID.

BY

FIELDING.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

GOODALL, *father to* VALENTINE.
VALENTINE, *attached to* CHARLOTTE.
LORD PUFF.
BLUFF, *a drunken colonel.*
OLDCASTLE, *intended for* CHARLOTTE.
RAKEIT, *servant to* CHARLOTTE.
SLAP, *a bailiff.*
CONSTABLE.
JOHN, *servant to* VALENTINE.
SECURITY, *a usurer.*

WOMEN.

MRS HIGHMAN, *a widow.*
CHARLOTTE, *niece to* MRS HIGHMAN.
LETTICE, *the Intriguing Chambermaid.*

Gentleman, Ladies, Constables, Servants, &c.

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A street.*

Enter MRS HIGHMAN, *pushing* JOHN *out of the door.*

Mrs High. BEGONE, sirrah! Out of my house, Mr Letter-carrier! and if I ever catch you in it again, your ears shall pay for your audacity.

John. Lord! ma'am, this is not a love-letter from my master to your niece, if the last was—this is only from Mrs Lettice, to your ladyship's woman, to invite her to our house this evening—we are to have a rout.

Mrs High. A rout, indeed! I'd rout you all to some tune, were I your mistress. But begone, sirrah: I'll listen no longer to your impudence; and tell that saucy jade, Lettice, to send no more of her letters to my house.

John. Lord! ma'am, here she is—so, if you please, you can tell her yourself. [*Exit.*

Enter LETTICE.

Mrs High. Oh, Mrs Lettice, is it you? I am extremely glad to see you—you are the very person I would meet.

Let. I am much at your service, madam.

Mrs High. Oh, madam, I know very well that; and at every one's service, I dare swear, that will pay for it: but all the service, madam, that I have for you, is to carry a message to your master—I desire, madam, that you would tell him from me, that he is a very great villain, and that I entreat him never more to come near my doors; for, if I find him within them, I will turn my niece out of them.

Let. Truly, madam, you must send this by another messenger: but, pray, what has my master done to deserve it should be sent at all?

Mrs High. He has done nothing yet, I believe, I thank Heaven and my own prudence; but I know what he would do.

Let. He would do nothing but what becomes a gentleman, I am confident.

Mrs High. Oh! I dare swear, madam. Seducing a young lady is acting like a very fine gentleman; but I shall keep my niece out of the hands of such fine gentlemen.

Let. You wrong my master, madam, cruelly; I know his designs on your niece are honourable.

Mrs High. Hussy, I have another match for her: she shall marry Mr Oldcastle.

Let. Oh! then, I find it is you that have a dishonourable design on your niece?

Mrs High. How, sauciness!

Let. Yes, madam; marrying a young lady, who is in love with a young fellow, to an old one, whom she hates, is the surest way to bring about I know what, that can possibly be taken.

Mrs High. I can bear this no longer. I would advise you, madam, and your master both, to keep from my house, or I shall take measures you won't like. [*Exit.*

Let. I defy you! We have the strongest party; and I warrant we'll get the better of you. But here comes the young lady herself.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. So, Mrs Lettice!

Let. 'Tis pity you had not come a little sooner, madam: your good aunt is but just gone, and has left positive orders, that you should make more frequent visits at our house.

Char. Indeed!

Let. Yes, ma'am; for she has forbid my master ever visiting at yours, and I know it will be impossible for you to live without seeing him.

Char. I assure you! Do you think me so fond, then?

Let. Do I! I know you are: you love nothing else, think of nothing else all day; and, if you will confess the truth, I dare lay a wager, that you dream of nothing else all night.

Char. Then to shew you, madam, how well you know me, the deuce take me if you are not in the right!

Let. Ah! madam, to a woman practised in love, like me, there is no occasion for confession. For my part, I don't want words to assure me of what the eyes tell me. Oh! if the lovers would but consult the eyes of their mistresses, we should not have such sighing, languishing, and despairing, as we have.

SONG.

Would lovers ever doubt their ears,
(On Delia's vows relying)
The youth would often quit his fears,
And change to smiles his sighing.
Your tongue may cheat,
And with deceit
Your softer wishes cover;
But, Oh! your eyes
Know no disguise,
Nor ever cheat your lover.

What need he trust your words precise,
Your soft desires denying;
When, Oh! he reads within your eyes
Your tender heart complying.
Your tongue may cheat,
And with deceit
Your softer wishes cover;
But, Oh! your eyes
Know no disguise,
Nor ever cheat your lover.

Enter VALENTINE.

Val. My dearest Charlotte! this is meeting my wishes indeed! for I was coming to wait on you.

Let. It's very lucky that you do meet her here! for her house is forbidden ground—you have seen your last of that, Mrs Highman swears.

Val. Ha! not go where my dear Charlotte is! What danger could deter me?

Char. Nay, the danger is to be mine—I am to be turned out of doors, if ever you are seen in them again.

Val. The apprehensions of your danger would, indeed, put it to the severest proof: but why will my dearest Charlotte continue in the house of one who threatens to turn her out of it? Why will she not know another home; one where she would find a protector from every kind of danger?

Char. How can you pretend to love me, Valentine, and ask me that in our present desperate circumstances?

Let. Nay, nay, don't accuse him wrongfully: I won't, indeed, insist that he gives you any great instance of his prudence by it; but, I'll swear it is a very strong one of his love, and such an instance, as, when a man has once shewn, no woman of any honesty, or honour, or gratitude, can refuse him any longer. For my part, if I had ever found a lover who had not wicked, mercenary views upon my fortune, I should have married him, whatever he had been.

Char. Thy fortune!

Let. My fortune!—Yes, madam, my fortune. I was worth fifty-six pounds before I put into

the lottery; what it will be now I can't tell; but you know somebody must get the great prize, and why not I?

Val. Oh, Charlotte! would you had the same sentiments with me! for, by Heavens! I apprehend no danger but that of losing you; and, believe me, love will sufficiently reward us for all the hazards we run on his account.

Let. Hist, hist! get you both about your business; Oldcastle is just turned the corner, and if he should see you together, you are undone. [*Exeunt* VALENTINE *and* CHARLOTTE.] Now will I banter this old coxcomb severely; for, I think it is a most impertinent thing in these old fellows to interpose in young people's sport.

Enter OLDCASTLE.

Old. Hem, hem! I profess it is a very severe easterly wind, and if it was not to see a sweetheart, I believe I should scarce have stirred abroad all day.

Let. Mr Oldcastle, your very humble servant.

Old. Your very humble servant, madam: I ask your pardon; but I profess I have not the honour of knowing you.

Let. Men of your figure, sir, are known by more than they are themselves able to remember; I am a poor handmaid of a young lady of your acquaintance, Miss Charlotte Highman.

Old. Oh! your very humble servant, madam. I hope your lady is well?

Let. Hum! so, so: she sent me, sir, of a small message to you.

Old. I am the happiest man in the world!

Let. To desire a particular favour of you.

Old. She honours me with her commands.

Let. She begs, if you have the least affection for her, that she may never see your face again.

Old. What! what?

Let. She is a very well-bred, civil, good-natured lady, and does not care to send a rude message; therefore, only bids me tell you, she hates you, scorns you, detests you more than any creature upon the earth; that, if you are resolved to marry, she would recommend you to a certain excellent dry nurse; and lastly, she bids me tell you, in this cold weather, never to go to bed without a good warm treacle-posset; and by no means lie without, at least, a pair of flannel waistcoats, and a double flannel night-cap.

Old. Hold your impertinent, saucy tongue!

Let. Nay, sir, don't be angry with me, I only deliver my message; and that, too, in as civil and concise a manner as possible.

Old. Your mistress is a pert young hussy; and I shall tell her mother of her.

Let. That will never do; 'tis I am your friend, and if we can get over three little obstacles, I don't despair of marrying you to her, yet.

Old. What are those obstacles?

Let. Why, sir, there is, in the first place, your great age; you are at least seventy-five!

Old. It is a lie! I want several——months of it.

Let. If you did not, I think we may get over this: one half of your fortune makes a very sufficient amends for your age.

Old. We shall not fall out about that.

Let. Well, sir; then there is, in the second place, your terrible, ungenteel air; this is a grand obstacle with her, who is doatingly fond of every thing that is fine and foppish; and, yet, I think, we may get over this, too, by the other half of your fortune.—And now, there remains but one, which, if you can find any thing to set aside, I believe I may promise you, you shall have her; and that is, sir, that horrible face of yours, which it is impossible for any one to see without being frightened.

Old. Ye impudent baggage! I'll tell your mistress!—I'll have you turned off!

Let. That will be well repaying me, indeed, for all the services I have done you.

Old. Services!

Let. Services! Yes, sir, services; and to let you see I think you fit for a husband, I'll have you myself!—Who can be more proper for a husband, than a man of your age? for, I think you could not have the conscience, nay, the impudence, to live above a year, or a year and half, at most: and a good plentiful jointure would make amends for one's enduring you as long as that, provided we live in separate parts of the house, and one had a good handsome groom of the chamber to attend one; though, really, in my opinion, you'd much better remain single, both for your character and constitution. [*Exit* LET.

Old. Get along, you damned saucy baggage! I thought this cursed easterly wind would blow me no good.—I'm resolved I won't stir out again till it changes. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A room in* VALENTINE'S *house.*

Enter JOHN, *meeting* VALENTINE.

John. Sir, a gentleman desires to see you.

Val. Shew him in. [*Exit* JOHN.

Enter SLAP.

Val. Your most obedient servant, sir; I have not the honour of knowing you, sir.

Slap. I believe you do not, Sir; I ask pardon, but I have a small writ against you.

Val. A writ against me!

Slap. Don't be uneasy, sir; it is only for a trifle, sir; about 200l.

Val. What must I do, sir?

Slap. Oh, sir! whatever you please! only pay the money, or give bail; which you please.

Val. I can do neither of them this instant, and I expect company every moment. I suppose, sir, you'll take my word till to-morrow morning?

Slap. Oh, yes, sir, with all my heart. If you will be so good as to step to my house hard by,

you shall be extremely well used, and I'll take your word.

Val. Your house! 'Sdeath! you rascal.

Slap. Nay, sir, 'tis in vain to bully.

Val. Nay, then—Who's there?—my servants!

Enter Servants.

Here, kick this fellow down stairs.

Slap. This is a rescue, remember that—a rescue, sir. I'll have my lord chief justice's warrant. [SLAP *is forced off by the servants.*

[*Exit* VALENTINE.

Enter RAKEIT *and* LETTICE.

Rake. You perceive, Mrs Lettice, the strength of my passion, by my frequent visits to you. I saw Oldcastle part from you just now; pray, what has he been entertaining you with?

Let. With his passion for your young mistress, or rather her passion for him. I have been bantering him till he is in such a rage, that I actually doubt whether he will not beat her or no.

Rake. Will you never leave off your frolics, since we must pay for them? You have put him out of humour; now will he go and put my lady out of humour; and, then, we may be all beaten for aught I know.

Let. Well, sirrah! and do you think I had not rather twenty such as you should be beaten to death, than my master should be robbed of his mistress?

Rake. Your humble servant, madam; you need not take any great pains to convince me of your fondness for your master. I believe he has more mistresses than what are in our house; but, hang it, I am too polite to be jealous; and if he has done me the favour with you, why, perhaps, I may return it one day with some body else. I am not the first gentleman of the party-coloured regiment, who has been even with his master.

Let. Why, indeed, masters and their men are often, both in dress and behaviour, so very like, that a woman may be innocently false, and mistake the one for the other. Nay, I don't know whether such a change as you mention may not be sometimes for the better.

Rake. But, my dear Lettice, I do not approve of this match in our family.

Let. Why so?

Rake. Why, you know how desperate Valentine's circumstances are, and she has no fortune.

Let. She hath, indeed, no fortune of her own; but her aunt Highman is very rich. And then, you know, we've hopes enow! There is hopes of my young master's growing better, for I am sure there is no possibility of his growing worse; hopes of my old master's staying abroad; hopes of his being drowned, if he attempts coming home; hopes of the stars falling——

Rake. Dear Mrs Lettice, do not jest with such serious things as hunger and thirst. Do you really think that all your master's entertainments are at an end?

Let. So far from it, that he is this day to give a grand entertainment to your mistress, and about a dozen more gentlemen and ladies.

Rake. My chops begin to water. I find your master is a very honest fellow; and, it is possible, may hold out two or three weeks longer.

Let. You are mistaken, sir; there will be no danger of his giving any more entertainments; for there is a certain gentleman, called an upholsterer, who, the moment that the company is gone, is to make his entrance into the house, and carry every thing out on't.

Rak. A very good way, faith, of furnishing a house to receive a wife in! your master has set me a very good pattern against you and I marrying, Mrs Lettice.

Let. Sauce-box! Do you think I'll have you?

Rake. Unless I can provide better for myself.

Let. Well, that I am fond of thee, I am certain; and what I am fond of, I can't imagine, unless it be thy invincible impudence.

Rake. Why, faith, I think I have the impudence of a gentleman, and there is nothing better to succeed with the ladies.

Let. Yes, yes, and be hanged to you! You know the power you have over us too well; and, though we are thoroughly acquainted with your falsehood, yet we are, nine in ten of us, fools enough to be caught.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A square, with* VALENTINE'S *house.*

Enter GOODALL *and servant, with a portmanteau.* LETTICE *comes out of the house.*

Good. THIS cursed stage-coach from Portsmouth hath fatigued me more than my voyage from the Cape of Good Hope; but, Heaven be praised, I am once more arrived within sight of my own doors. I cannot help thinking how pleased my son will be to see me returned a full year sooner than my intention.

Let. He would be much more pleased to hear you were at the Cape of Good Hope yet. [*Aside.*

Good. I hope I shall find my poor boy at home; I dare swear he will die with joy to see me.

Let. I believe he is half dead already; but now for you, my good master.—[*Aside.*]—Bless me! What do I see? An apparition!

Good. Lettice!

Let. Is it my dear master, Goodall, returned,

or is it the devil in his shape? Is it you, sir? Is it positively you yourself?

Good. Even so. How do you do, Lettice?

Let. Much at your honour's service. I am heartily glad—it really makes me cry—to see your honour in such good health. Why, the air of the Indies hath agreed vastly with you. Indeed, sir, you ought to have staid a little longer there, for the sake of your health—I would to the Lord you had! [*Aside.*

Good. Well; but how does my son do? And how hath he behaved himself in my absence? I hope he hath taken great care of my affairs?

Let. I'll answer for him; he hath put your affairs into a condition that will surprise you.

Good. I warrant you, he is every day in the Alley: Stocks have gone just as I imagined; and if he followed my advice, he must have amassed a vast sum of money.

Let. Not a farthing, sir.

Good. How, how, how!

Let. Sir, he hath paid it out as fast as it came in.

Good. How!

Let. Put it out, I mean, sir, to interest, to interest. Sir, why, our house hath been a perfect fair ever since you went; people coming for money every hour of the day.

Good. That's very well done; and I long to see my dear boy.—[*To* LETTICE.]—Knock at the door.

Let. He is not at home, sir; and if you have such a desire to see him————

Enter SECURITY.

Sec. Your servant, Mrs Lettice.

Let. Your servant, Mr Security. Here's a rogue of a usurer, who hath found a proper time to ask for his money in! [*Aside.*

Sec. Do you know, Mrs Lettice, that I am weary of following your master, day after day, in this manner, without finding him; and that if he does not pay me to-day, I shall sue out an execution directly. A thousand pounds are a sum————

Good. What, what? what's this I hear?

Let. I'll explain it to you by and by, sir?

Good. Does my son owe you a thousand pounds?

Sec. Your son, sir!

Good. Yes, sir; this young woman's master, who lives at that house; Mr Valentine Goodall is my son.

Sec. Yes, sir, he does; and I am very glad you are returned to pay it me.

Good. There go two words, though, to that bargain.

Let. I believe, sir, you will do it with a great deal of joy, when you know that his owing this money, is purely an effect of his good conduct.

Good. Good conduct! Owing money good conduct!

Let. Yes, sir; he hath bought a house at the price of two thousand pounds, which every one says is worth more than four; and this he could not have done without borrowing this thousand pound. I am sure, sir, I, and he, and Trusty, ran all over the town to get the money, that he might not lose so good a bargain. He'll pay the money fast enough, now. [*Aside.*

Good. I am overjoyed at my son's behaviour. Sir, you need give yourself no pain about the money; return to-morrow morning, and you shall receive it.

Sec. Sir, your word is sufficient for a much greater sum; and I am your very humble servant. [*Exit* SEC.

Good. Well, but tell me a little—in what part of the town hath my son bought this house?

Let. In what part of the town?

Good. Yes; there are, you know, some quarters better than others——as, for example, this here————

Let. Well, and it is in this that it stands.

Good. What, not the great house, yonder, is it?

Lat. No, no, no. Do you see that house yonder—where the windows seem to have been just cleaned?

Good. Yes.

Let. It is not that—and, a little beyond, you see another very large house, higher than any other in the square?

Good. I do.

Let. But it is not that. Take particular notice of the house opposite to it; a very handsome house, is it not?

Good. Yes; indeed it is.

Let. That is not the house. But you may see one with great gates before it, almost opposite to another that fronts a street; at the end of which stands the house which your son hath bought.

Good. There is no good house in that street, as I remember, but Mrs Highman's.

Let. That's the very house.

Good. That is a very good bargain, indeed; but how comes a woman in her circumstances to sell her house?

Let. It is impossible, sir, to account for people's actions; besides, poor dear, she is out of her senses.

Good. Out of her senses!

Let. Yes, sir; her family hath taken out a commission of lunacy against her; and her son, who is a most abandoned prodigal, has sold all she had for half its value.

Good. Son! why she was not married when I went away; she could not have a son.

Let, O yes she could, sir—She's not married, to be sure; but to the great surprise of every

one, and to the great scandal of all our sex, there appeared all of a sudden a very lusty young fellow, of the age of three and twenty, whom she owned to have been her son, and that his father was a grenadier in the first regiment of guards.

Good. Oh, monstrous!

Let. Ah, sir, if every child in this city knew his own father, if children were to inherit only the estates of those who begot them, it would cause a great confusion in inheritances!

Good. Well, but I stand here talking too long; knock at the door.

Let. What shall I do? [*Aside.*

Good. You seem in a consternation; no accident hath happened to my son, I hope.

Let. No, sir, but———

Good. But! but what? Hath any one robbed me in my absence?

Let. No, sir; not absolutely robbed you, sir. What shall I say?——— [*Aside.*

Good. Explain yourself: speak.

Let. Oh, sir! I can withhold my tears no longer———Enter not, I beseech you, sir, your house—Sir, your dear house, that you and I, and my poor master loved so much, within these six months———

Good. What of my house within these six months———

Let. Hath been haunted, sir, with the most terrible apparitions that were ever heard or beheld! you'd think the devil himself had taken possession of it: nay, I believe he hath too: all the wild noises in the universe, the squeaking of pigs, the grinding of knives, the whetting of saws, the whistling of winds, the roaring of seas, the hooting of owls, the howling of wolves, the braying of asses, the squalling of children, and the scolding of wives, all put together, make not so hideous a concert. This I myself have heard; nay, and I have seen such sights! one with about twenty heads, and a hundred eyes, and mouths, and noses in each.

Good. Heyday! the wench is mad! Stand from before the door! I'll see whether the devil can keep me out from my own house. Haunted, indeed!———

Let. Sir, I have a friendship for you, and you shall not go in.

Good. How? not go into my own house?

Let. No, sir, not till the devil is driven out on't; there are two priests at work upon him now. Hark, I think the devils are dancing a Fandango. Nay, sir, you may listen yourself, and get in too, if you can.

Good. Ha! by all that's gracious, I hear a noise! [*Laughing within.*] What monstrous squalling is that?

Let. Why, sir, I am surprised you should think I would impose upon you: had you known the terrors we underwent for a whole fortnight, especially poor I, sir, who lay every night frightened with the sight of the most monstrous large things! there I lay as quiet as a lamb, fearing every minute what they would do to me———

Good. Can all this be true, or are you imposing on me? I have indeed heard of such things as apparitions, on just causes, and believe in them; but why they should haunt my house, I can't imagine.

Let. Why, sir, they tell me, before you bought the house, there was a pedlar killed in it.

Good. A pedlar! I must inquire into all these things. But, in the mean time, I must send this portmanteau to my son's new house.

Let. No, sir, that's a little improper at present.

Good. What, is that house haunted? Hath the devil taken possession of that house, too?

Let. No, sir; but Madam Highman hath not yet quitted possession of it. I told you before, sir, that she was out of her senses; and if any one does but mention the sale of her house to her, it throws her into the most violent convulsions.

Good. Well, well; I shall know how to humour her madness.

Let. I wish, sir, for a day or two———

Good. You throw me out of all manner of patience. I am resolved I will go thither this instant.

Let. Here she is herself; but pray remember the condition she is in, and don't do any thing to chagrin her.

Enter MRS HIGHMAN.

Mrs High. What do I see! Mr Goodall returned?

Let. Yes, madam, it is him; but, alas! he's not himself—he's distracted; his losses in his voyage have turned his brain, and he is become a downright lunatic.

Mrs High. I am heartily concerned for his misfortune. Poor gentleman!

Let. If he should speak to you by chance, have no regard to what he says; we are going to shut him up in a madhouse with all expedition.

Mrs High. [*Aside.*] He hath a strange wandering in his countenance.

Good. [*Aside.*] How miserably she is altered! She hath a terrible look with her eyes.

Mrs High. Mr Goodall, your very humble servant. I am glad to see you returned, though I am sorry for your misfortune.

Good. I must have patience, and trust in Heaven, and in the power of the priests, who are now endeavouring to lay these wicked spirits, with which my house is haunted; but give me leave to ask you the cause of your phrenzy; for I much question whether this commission of lunacy that has been taken out against you, be not without sufficient proof.

Mrs High. A commission of lunacy against me! me!

Good. Lettice, I see she is worse than I imagined.

Let. She is very bad now indeed.

Mrs High. However, if you are not more mischievous than you at present seem, I think it is wrong in them to confine you in a madhouse.

Good. Confine me! ha, ha, ha! This is turning the tables upon me indeed! But, Mrs Highman, I would not have you be uneasy that your house is sold; at least, it is better for you that my son hath bought it than another; for you shall have an apartment in it still, in the same manner as if it was still your own, and you were in your senses.

Mrs High. What's all this? As if I was still in my senses! Let me tell you, Mr Goodall, you are a poor, distracted wretch, and ought to have an apartment in a dark room, and clean straw.

Good. Since you come to that, madam, I shall not let you into my doors; and I give you warning to take away your things, for I shall fill all the rooms with goods within these few days.

Enter SLAP, *Constable, and Assistants.*

Slap. That's the door, Mr Constable.

Let. What's to be done now, I wonder?

Con. Open the door, in the king's name, or I shall break it open.

Good. Who are you, sir, in the devil's name? and what do you want in that house?

Slap. Sir, I have a prisoner there, and I have my lord chief justice's warrant against him.

Good. For what sum, sir? Are you a justice of the peace?

Slap. I am one of his majesty's officers, sir; and this day I arrested one Mr Valentine Goodall, who lives in this house, for two hundred pounds; his servants have rescued him, and I have a judge's warrant for the rescue.

Good. What do I hear! But hark'e, friend, that house that you are going to break open, is haunted; and there is no one in it but a couple of priests, who are laying the devil.

Slap. I warrant you I lay the devil better than all the priests in Europe. Come, Mr Constable, do your office, I have no time to lose, sir; I have several other writs to execute before night.

Let. I have defended my pass as long as I can, and now I think it is no cowardice to steal off. [*Exit.*

Enter COLONEL BLUFF, *and* LORD PUFF.

Col. What, in the devil's name, is the meaning of this riot? What is the reason, scoundrels, that you dare disturb gentlemen, who are getting as drunk as lords?

Slap. Sir, we have authority for what we do.

Col. Damn your authority, sir! if you don't go about your business, I shall shew you my authority, and send you all to the devil.

Slap. Sir, I desire you would give us leave to enter the house, and seize our prisoner.

Col. Not I, upon my honour, sir.

Slap. If you oppose us any longer, I shall proceed to force.

Col. If you love force, I'll shew you the way, you dogs! [COLONEL *drives them off.*

Good. I find I am distracted; I am stark raving mad. I am undone, ruined, cheated, imposed on! but, please Heaven, I'll go see what's in my house.

Col. Hold, sir, you must not enter here!

Good. Not enter into my own house, sir!

Col. No, sir, if it be yours, you must not come within it.

Good. Gentlemen, I only beg to speak with the master of the house.

Col. Sir, the master of the house desires to speak with no such fellows as you are; you are not fit company for any of the gentlemen in this house.

Good. Sir, the master of this house is my son.

Col. Sir, your most obedient humble servant; I am overjoyed to see you returned. Give me leave, sir, to introduce you to this gentleman.

Good. Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Col. Give me leave to tell you, sir, you have the honour of being father to one of the finest gentlemen of the age: a man so accomplished, so well-bred, and so generous, that I believe he never would part with a guest while he had a shilling in his pocket, nor, indeed, while he could borrow one.

Good. I believe it, indeed, sir; therefore, you can't wonder if I am impatient to see him.

Col. Be not in such haste, dear sir; I want to talk with you about your affairs; I hope you have had good success in the Indies, have cheated the company handsomely, and made an immense fortune?

Good. I have no reason to complain.

Col. I am glad on't—give me your hand, sir; and so will your son, I dare swear; and let me tell you, it will be very opportune; he began to want it. You can't imagine, sir, what a fine life he has led since you went away—it would do your heart good if you was but to know what an equipage he has kept; what balls and entertainments he has made; he is the talk of the whole town, sir; a man would work with pleasure for such a son; he is a fellow with a soul, damn me! Your fortune won't be thrown away upon him; for, get as much as you please, my life, he spends every farthing!

Good. Pray, gentlemen, let me see this miracle of a son of mine.

Col. That you should, sir, long ago; but, really, sir, the house is a little out of order at present; there is but one room furnished in it, and that is so full of company, that I am afraid there would be a small deficiency of chairs. You can't imagine, sir, how opportune you are come; there was not any one thing left in the house to raise any money upon.

Good. What, all my pictures gone?

Col. He sold them first, sir; he was obliged

to sell them for the delicacy of his taste: he certainly is the modestest young fellow in the world, and has complained to me a hundred times, drunk and sober——

Good. Drunk, sir! what, does my son get drunk?

Col. Oh, yes, sir; regularly, twice a day. He has complained of the indecent liberty painters take in exposing the breasts and limbs of women; you had, indeed, sir, a very scandalous collection, and he was never easy while they were in the house.

Enter VALENTINE.

Val. My father returned! oh, let me throw myself at his feet! and believe me, sir, I am at once overjoyed, and ashamed, to see your face.

Col. I told you, sir, he was one of the modestest young fellows in England.

Good. You may very well be ashamed; but come, let me see the inside of my house; let me see that both sides of my walls are standing.

Val. Sir, I have a great deal of company within, of the first fashion, and beg you would not expose me before them.

Good. Oh, sir! I am their very humble servant; I am infinitely obliged to all the persons of fashion, that they will so generously condescend to eat a poor citizen out of house and home.

Col. Hark'e, Val? shall we toss this old fellow in a blanket?

Val. Sir, I trust in your good nature and forgiveness; and will wait on you in.

Good. Oh, that ever I should live to see this day! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A dining room.*

LORD PUFF, *and several gentlemen and ladies discovered at table.*

Enter GOODALL *and* VALENTINE.

Val. Gentlemen, my father being just arrived from the Indies, desires to make one of this good company.

Good. My good lords, (that I may affront none by calling him beneath his title) I am highly sensible of the great honour you do myself and my son, by filling my poor house with your noble persons, and your noble persons with my poor wine and provisions.

Lord Puff. Sir! Rat me! I would have you know, I think I do you too much honour in entering into your doors. But I am glad you have taught me at what distance to keep such mechanics for the future. Come, gentlemen, let us to the opera. I see if a man hath not good blood in his veins, riches won't teach him to behave like a gentleman.

[*Exit* LORD PUFF.

Good. 'Sbodlikins! I am in a rage! That ever a fellow should upbraid me with good blood in his veins, when, odsheart! the best blood in his veins hath run through my bottles. Come, sir, follow your companions; for I am determined to turn you out directly.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Then, sir, I am determined to go with him. Be comforted, Valentine; I have some fortune which my aunt cannot prevent me from, and it will make us happy, for a while at least; and I prefer a year, a month, a day, with the man I love, to a whole stupid age without him.

[*As* VALENTINE *and* CHARLOTTE *are going, they are met by* MRS HIGHMAN *and* LETTICE.

Mrs High. What do I see! my niece in the very arms of her betrayer!

Let. I humbly ask pardon of you both—but my master was so heartily in love with your niece, and she so heartily in love with my master, that I was determined to leave no stone unturned to bring them together.

Good. Eh! Egad, I like her generous passion for my son so much, that if you, madam, will give her a fortune equal to what I shall settle on him, I shall not prevent their happiness.

Mrs High. Won't you? Then I shall do all in my power to make it a match.

Let. And so, sir, you take no notice of poor Lettice? but, statesman like, your own turn served, forget your friends?

SONG.

Let. That statesmen oft' their friends forget,
Their ends obtained, is clear, sir;
So, I'm forgot, your place I'll quit,
And seek a service here, sir.

I'll prove my love in every sense,
Be dutiful, observant,
So drop in here a few nights hence,
And hire your humble servant.

CHORUS.

She'll prove her love in every sense,
Be dutiful, observant,
So drop in here a few nights hence,
And hire your humble servant.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

MOCK DOCTOR.

BY

FIELDING.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
GREGORY, *the Mock Doctor.*	CHARLOTTE, *attached to* LEANDER.
SIR JASPER, *father to* CHARLOTTE.	DORCAS, *wife to* GREGORY.
LEANDER, *attached to* CHARLOTTE.	
HARRY, JAMES, } *Servants to* SIR JASPER.	
DAVY.	
DOCTOR HELLEBORE.	

Scene—the Country.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A wood.*

DORCAS, GREGORY.

Gre. I TELL you, No, I won't comply; and it is my business to talk, and to command.

Dor. And I tell you, You shall conform to my will; and that I was not married to you, to suffer your ill-humours.

Gre. O the intolerable fatigue of matrimony! Aristotle never said a better thing in his life, than when he told us, 'That a wife was worse than a devil.'

Dor. Hear the learned gentleman with his Aristotle!

Gre. And a learned man I am, too: find me out a maker of faggots that's able, like myself, to reason upon things, or that can boast such an education as mine.

Dor. An education!

Gre. Ay, hussy, a regular education: first at the charity-school, where I learnt to read; then I waited on a gentleman at Oxford, where I learnt—very near as much as my master; from whence I attended a travelling physician six years, under the facetious denomination of a Merry Andrew, where I learnt physic.

Dor. O that thou had'st followed him still! Cursed be the hour, wherein I answered the parson, I will.

Gre. And cursed be the parson that asked thee the question!

Dor. You have reason to complain of him indeed—who ought to be on your knees every moment, returning thanks to Heaven, for that great blessing it sent you, when it sent you myself.—I hope you have not the assurance to think you deserv'd such a wife as me?

Gre. No, really, I don't think I do.

DORCAS *sings.*

When a lady, like me, condescends to agree,
To let such a jackanapes taste her,
With what zeal and care, shou'd he worship the fair,
Who gives him what's meat for his master?
His actions should still
Attend on her will:—
Hear, sirrah, and take it for warning;
To her he should be
Each night on his knee,
And so he should be on each morning.

Gre. Meat for my master! you were meat for your master, if I an't mistaken. Come, come, Madam, it was a lucky day for you, when you found me out.

Dor. Lucky, indeed! a fellow, who eats every thing I have!

Gre. That happens to be a mistake, for I drink some part on't.

Dor. That has not even left me a bed to lie on!

Gre. You'll rise the earlier.

Dor. And who, from morning till night, is eternally in an alehouse!

Gre. It's genteel; the squire does the same.

Dor Pray, sir, what are you willing I shall do with my family?

Gre. Whatever you please.

Dor. My four little children, that are continually crying for bread?

Gre. Give 'em a rod! best cure in the world for crying children.

Dor. And do you imagine, sot—

Gre. Hark ye, my dear, you know my temper is not over and above passive, and that my arm is extremely active.

Dor. I laugh at your threats, poor, beggarly, insolent fellow!

Gre. Soft object of my wishing eyes, I shall play with your pretty ears.

Dor. Touch me if you dare, you insolent, impudent, dirty, lazy, rascally——

Gre. Oh, ho, ho! you will have it then, I find. [*Beats her.*

Dor. O murder, murder!

Enter Squire ROBERT.

Rob. What's the matter here? Fy upon you, fy upon you, neighbour, to beat your wife in this scandalous manner!

Dor. Well, sir, and if I have a mind to be beat, and what then?

Rob. O dear, madam, I give my consent with all my heart and soul.

Dor. What's that to you, saucebox? Is it any business of yours?

Rob. No, certainly, madam!

Dor. Here's an impertinent fellow for you, won't suffer a husband to beat his own wife!

AIR.—*Winchester Wedding.*

Go thrash your own rib, sir, at home,
Nor thus interfere with our strife;
May cuckoldom still be his doom,
Who strives to part husband and wife!
Suppose I've a mind he should drub,
Whose bones are they, sir, he's to lick?
At whose expence is it, you scrub?
You are not to find him a stick.

Rob. Neighbour, I ask your pardon heartily; here, take and thrash your wife; beat her as you ought to do.

Gre. No, sir, I won't beat her.

Rob. O sir, that's another thing.

Gre. I'll beat her when I please, and will not beat her when I do not please. She is my wife, and not yours.

Rob. Certainly.

Dor. Give me the stick, dear husband.

Rob. Well, if ever I attempt to part husband and wife again, may I be beaten myself! [*Exit* ROB.

Gre. Come, my dear, let us be friends.

Dor. What, after beating me so?

Gre. 'Twas but in jest.

Dor. I desire you will crack your jests on your own bones, not on mine.

Gre. Pshaw! you know you and I are one, and I beat one half of myself when I beat you.

Dor. Yes, but for the future I desire you will beat the other half of yourself.

Gre. Come, my pretty dear, I ask pardon; I'm sorry for't.

Dor. For once I pardon you—but you shall pay for it. [*Aside.*

Gre. Psha! psha! child, these are only little affairs, necessary in friendship; four or five good blows with a cudgel between your very fond couples, only tend to heighten the affections. I'll now to the wood, and I promise thee to make a hundred faggots before I come home again. [*Exit.*

Dor. If I am not revenged on those blows of yours!—Oh, that I could but think of some method to be revenged on him! Hang the rogue, he's quite insensible of cuckoldom!

AIR.—*Oh London is a fine town.*

In ancient days, I've heard, with horns
The wife her spouse could fright,
Which now the hero bravely scorns,
So common is the sight.
To city, country, camp, or court,
Or wheresoe'er he go,
No horned brother dares make sport;
They're cuckolds all a-row.

Oh that I could find out some invention to get him well drubbed!

Enter HARRY *and* JAMES.

Har. Were ever two fools sent on such a message as we are, in quest of a dumb doctor!

James. Blame your own cursed memory, that made you forget his name. For my part, I'll travel through the world rather than return without him; that were as much as a limb or two were worth.

Har. Was ever such a cursed misfortune, to lose the letter! I should not even know his name if I were to hear it.

Dor. Can I find no invention to be revenged! —Heyday! who are these?

James. Hark ye, mistress, do you know where ——where where doctor—What-d'ye-call-him lives?

Dor. Doctor who?

James. Doctor———doctor———what's his name?

Dor. Hey! what, has the fellow a mind to banter me?

Har. Is there no physician hereabouts famous for curing dumbness?

Dor. I fancy you have no need of such a physician, Mr Impertinence.

Har. Don't mistake us, good woman, we don't mean to banter you: we are sent by our master, whose daughter has lost her speech, for a certain physician who lives hereabouts; we have lost our direction, and 'tis as much as our lives are worth to return without him.

Dor. There is one Dr Lazy lives just by, but he has left off practising. You would not get him a mile to save the lives of a thousand patients.

James. Direct us but to him; we'll bring him with us one way or other, I warrant you.

Har. Ay, ay, we'll have him with us, though we carry him on our backs.

Dor. Ha! Heaven has inspired me with one of the most admirable inventions to be revenged on my hangdog!—[*Aside.*]—I assure you, if you can get him with you, he'll do your young lady's business for her; he's reckoned one of the best physicians in the world, especially for dumbness.

Har. Pray tell us where he lives?

Dor. You'll never be able to get him out of his own house; but if you watch hereabouts, you'll certainly meet with him, for he very often amuses himself here with cutting wood.

Har. A physician cut wood!

James. I suppose he amuses himself in searching after herbs, you mean?

Dor. No; he's one of the most extraordinary men in the world: he goes drest like a common clown; for there is nothing he so much dreads as to be known for a physician.

James. All your great men have some strange oddities about them.

Dor. Why, he will suffer himself to be beat before he will own himself to be a physician —and I'll give you my word, you'll never make him own himself one, unless you both take a good cudgel and thrash him into it; 'tis what we are all forced to do when we have any need of him.

James. What a ridiculous whim is here!

Dor. Very true; and in so great a man.

James. And is he so very skilful a man?

Dor. Skilful—why he does miracles. About half a year ago, a woman was given over by all her physicians, nay, she had been dead some time; when this great man came to her, as soon as he saw her, he poured out a little drop of something down her throat——he had no sooner done it, than she got out of her bed, and walked about the room as if there had been nothing the matter with her.

Both. O, prodigious!

Dor. 'Tis not above three weeks ago, that a child of twelve years old fell from the top of a house to the bottom, and broke its skull, its arms, and legs.—Our physician was no sooner drubbed into making him a visit, than, having rubbed the child all over with a certain ointment, it got upon its legs, and run away to play.

Both. Oh most wonderful!

Har. Hey! Gad, James, we'll drub him out of a pot of this ointment.

James. But can he cure dumbness?

Dor. Dumbness! Why the curate of our parish's wife was born dumb; and the doctor, with a sort of wash, washed her tongue, that he set it agoing so, that in less than a month's time she outtalked her husband.

Har. This must be the very man we were sent after.

Dor. Yonder is the very man I speak of.

James. What! that he yonder?

Dor. The very same.———He has spied us, and taken up his bill.

James. Come, Harry, don't let us lose one moment.—Mistress, your servant; we give you ten thousand thanks for this favour.

Dor. Be sure you make good use of your sticks.

James. He shan't want that. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another part of the wood.*

GREGORY *discovered sitting on the ground, with faggots about him.*

Gre. Pox on't! 'tis most confounded hot weather! Hey, who have we here?

Enter JAMES *and* HARRY.

James. Sir, your most obedient humble servant———

Gre. Sir, your servant.

James. We are mighty happy in finding you here———

Gre. Ay, like enough—

James. 'Tis in your power, sir, to do us a very great favour—We come, sir, to implore your assistance in a certain affair.

Gre. If it be in my power to give you any assistance, masters, I am very ready to do it.

James. Sir, you are extremely obliging—But, dear sir, let me beg you be covered; the sun will hurt your complexion.

Har. For Heaven's sake, sir, be covered.

Gre. These should be footmen by their dress, but courtiers by their ceremony. [*Aside.*

James. You must not think it strange, sir, that we come thus to seek after you; men of your capacity will be sought after by the whole world.

Gre. Truly, gentlemen, though I say it, that should not say it, I have a pretty good hand at a faggot.

James. O, dear sir!

Gre. You may perhaps buy faggots cheaper otherwise; but if you find such in all this country, you shall have mine for nothing. To make but one word then with you, you shall have mine for ten shillings a hundred.

James. Don't talk in that manner, I desire you.

Gre. I could not sell them a penny cheaper, if 'twas to my father.

James. Dear sir, we know you very well—— don't jest with us in this manner.

Gre. Faith, master, I am so much in earnest, that I can't bate one farthing.

James. O pray, sir, leave this idle discourse.—Can a person like you amuse yourself in this manner? Can a learned and famous physician like you, try to disguise himself to the world, and bury such fine talents in the woods?

Gre. The fellow's a fool!

James. Let me intreat you, sir, not to dissemble with us.

Har. It is in vain, sir! we know what you are.

Gre. Know what you are! what do you know of me?

James. Why, we know you, sir, to be a very great physician.

Gre. Physician in your teeth: I a physician!

James. The fit is on him——Sir, let me beseech you to conceal yourself no longer, and oblige us to—you know what.

Gre. Devil take me if I know what, sir! But I know this, that I'm no physician.

James. We must proceed to the usual remedy, I find—And so you are no physician?

Gre. No.

James. You are no physician?

Gre. No, I tell you.

James. Well, if we must, we must. [*Beat him.*

Gre. Oh, oh! gentlemen, gentlemen! what are you doing? I am—I am—whatever you please to have me.

James. Why will you oblige us, sir, to this violence?

Har. Why will you force us to this troublesome remedy?

James. I assure you, sir, it gives me a great deal of pain.

Gre. I assure you, sir, and so it does me. But, pray, gentlemen, what is the reason that you have a mind to make a physician of me?

James. What! do you deny your being a physician again?

Gre. And the devil take me if I am!

Har. You are no physician?

Gre. May I be poxed if I am!——[*They beat him.*]——Oh, oh!——Dear gentlemen! oh! for Heaven's sake! I am a physician, and an apothecary too, if you'll have me; I had rather be any thing than be knocked o' the head.

James. Dear sir, I am rejoiced to see you come to your senses; I ask pardon ten thousand times for what you have forced us to.

Gre. Perhaps I am deceived myself, and I am a physician, without knowing it. But, dear gentleman, are you certain I'm a physician?

James. Yes, the greatest physician in the world.

Gre. Indeed!

Har. A physician that has cured all sorts of distempers.

Gre. The devil I have!

James. That has made a woman walk about the room after she was dead six hours.

Har. That set a child upon its legs, immediately after it had broke them.

James. That made the curate's wife, who was dumb, talk faster than her husband.

Har. Look ye, sir, you shall have content; my master will give you whatever you will demand.

Gre. Shall I have whatever I will demand?

James. You may depend upon it.

Gre. I am a physician without doubt—I had forgot it; but I begin to recollect myself.—Well, and what is the distemper I am to cure?

James. My young mistress, sir, has lost her tongue.

Gre. The devil take me if I have found it!—But, come, gentlemen, if I must go with you, I must have a physician's habit; for a physician can no more prescribe without a full wig, than without a fee. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—SIR JASPER'S *house.*

Enter SIR JASPER *and* JAMES.

Sir Jas. WHERE is he? Where is he?

James. Only recruiting himself after his journey. You need not be impatient, sir; for were my young lady dead, he'd bring her to life again. He makes no more of bringing a patient to life, than other physicians do of killing him.

Sir Jas. 'Tis strange so great a man should have those unaccountable odd humours you mentioned.

James. 'Tis but a good blow or two, and he comes immediately to himself——Here he is.

Enter GREGORY.

James. Sir, this is the doctor.

Sir Jas. Dear sir, you're the welcomest man in the world.

Gre. Hippocrates says we should both be covered.

Sir Jas. Ha! does Hippocrates say so? In what chapter, pray?

Gre. In his chapter of Hats.

Sir Jas. Since Hippocrates says so, I shall obey him.

Gre. Doctor, after having exceedingly travelled in the highway of letters——

Sir Jas. Doctor! Pray, whom do you speak to?

Gre. To you, doctor.

Sir Jas. Ha, ha!——I am a knight, thank the king's grace for it, but no doctor.

Gre. What, you're no doctor?

Sir Jas. No, upon my word!

Gre. You're no doctor?

Sir Jas. Doctor! no.

Gre. There—'tis done. [*Beats him.*

Sir Jas. Done, in the devil's name! What's done?

Gre. Why, now you are made a doctor of physic——I am sure 'tis all the degrees I ever took.

Sir Jas. What devil of a fellow have you brought here?

James. I told you, sir, the doctor had strange whims with him.

Sir Jas. Whims, quotha!—Egad, I shall bind his physicianship over to his good behaviour, if he has any more of these whims.

Gre. Sir, I ask pardon for the liberty I have taken.

Sir Jas. Oh! 'tis very well, 'tis very well for once.

Gre. I am sorry for those blows—

Sir Jas. Nothing at all, nothing at all, sir.

Gre. Which I was obliged to have the honour of laying on so thick upon you.

Sir Jas. Let's talk no more of them, sir——My daughter, doctor, is fallen into a very strange distemper.

Gre. Sir, I am overjoyed to hear it; and I wish, with all my heart, you and your whole family had the same occasion for me as your daughter, to shew the great desire I have to serve you.

Sir Jas. Sir, I am obliged to you.

Gre. I assure you, sir, I speak from the very bottom of my soul.

Sir Jas. I do believe you, sir, from the very bottom of mine.

Gre. What is your daughter's name?

Sir Jas. My daughter's name is Charlotte.

Gre. Are you sure she was christened Charlotte?

Sir Jas. No, sir; she was christened Charlotta.

Gre. Hum! I had rather she should have been christened Charlotte. Charlotte is a very good name for a patient; and, let me tell you, the name is often of as much service to the patient, as the physician is.

Sir Jas. Sir, my daughter is here.

Enter CHARLOTTE *and Maid.*

Gre. Is that my patient? Upon my word she carries no distemper in her countenance—and I fancy a healthy young fellow would sit very well upon her.

Sir Jas. You make her smile, doctor.

Gre. So much the better; 'tis a very good sign when we can bring a patient to smile; it is a sign that the distemper begins to clarify, as we say.—Well, child, what's the matter with you? What's your distemper?

Char. Han, hi, hon, han.

Gre. What do you say?

Char. Han, hi, han, hon.

Gre. What, what, what?——

Char. Han, hi, hon——

Gre. Han! hon! honin! ha?——I don't understand a word she says. Han! hi! hon! What the devil of a language is this?

Sir Jas. Why, that's her distemper, sir. She's become dumb, and no one can assign the cause—and this distemper, sir, has kept back her marriage.

Gre. Kept back her marriage! Why so?

Sir Jas. Because her lover refuses to have her, till she's cured.

Gre. O lud! Was ever such a fool, that would not have his wife dumb?——Would to Heaven my wife was dumb, I'd be far from desiring to cure her!—Does this distemper, this Han, hi, hon, oppress her very much?

Sir Jas. Yes, sir.

Gre. So much the better. Has she any great pains?

Sir Jas. Very great.

Gre. That's just as I would have it. Give me your hand, child. Hum—ha—a very dumb pulse indeed.

Sir Jas. You have guessed her distemper.

Gre. Ay, sir, we great physicians know a distemper immediately: I know some of the college would call this the boree, or the coupee, or the sinkee, or twenty other distempers; but I give you my word, sir, your daughter is nothing more than dumb——So I'd have you be very easy, for there is nothing else the matter with her——If she were not dumb, she would be as well as I am.

Sir Jas. But I should be glad to know, doctor, from whence her dumbness proceeds?

Gre. Nothing so easily accounted for.——Her dumbness proceeds from her having lost her speech.

Sir Jas. But whence, if you please, proceeds her having lost her speech?

Gre. All our best authors will tell you, it is the impediment of the action of the tongue.

Sir Jas. But if you please, dear sir, your sentiments upon that impediment?

Gre. Aristotle has, upon that subject, said very fine things; very fine things.

Sir Jas. I believe it, doctor.

Gre. Ah! he was a great man; he was indeed a very great man—— A man, who, upon that subject, was a man that——But, to return to our reasoning: I hold, that this impediment of the action of the tongue is caused by certain humours, which our great physicians call—Humours—Humours——Ah! you understand Latin——

Sir Jas. Not in the least.

Gre. What, not understand Latin?

Sir Jas. No, indeed, doctor.

Gre. Cubricius arci thurum cathalimus, singulariter nom. Hæc musa; hic, hæc, hoc, genitivo hujus, hunc, hanc musæ. Bonus, bona, bonum. Estne oratio Latinus? Etiam. Quia substantivo et adjectivum concordat in generi numerum et casus, sic dicunt, aiunt, prædicant, clamitant, et similibus.

Sir Jas. Ah! why did I neglect my studies?

Har. What a prodigious man is this!

Gre. Besides, sir, certain spirits passing from the left side, which is the seat of the liver, to the right, which is the seat of the heart, we find the lungs, which we call in Latin, whiskerus, having communication with the brain, which we name in Greek, jacbootos, by means of a hollow vein, which we call in Hebrew, periwiggus, meet in the road with the said spirits, which fill the ventricles of the omotaplasmus; and because the said humours have—you comprehend me well, sir? and because the said humours have a certain malignity——listen seriously, I beg you.

Sir Jas. I do.

Gre. Have a certain malignity that is caused—be attentive, if you please.

Sir Jas. I am.

Gre. That is caused, I say, by the acrimony of the humours engendered in the concavity of the diaphragm; thence it arrives, that these vapours, Propria quæ maribus tribuuntur, mascula, dicas, ut sunt divorum, Mars, Bacchus, Apollo, virorum.—This, sir, is the cause of your daughter's being dumb.

James. O that I had but his tongue!

Sir Jas. It is impossible to reason better, no doubt. But, dear sir, there is one thing—I always thought, till now, that the heart was on the left side, and the liver on the right.

Gre. Ay, sir, so they were formerly; but we have changed all that. The college at present, sir, proceeds upon an entire new method.

Sir Jas. I ask your pardon, sir.

Gre. Oh, sir! there's no harm——you're not obliged to know so much as we do.

Sir Jas. Very true; but, doctor, what would you have done with my daughter?

Gre. What would I have done with her? why, my advice is, that you immediately put her into a bed warmed with a brass warming-pan: cause her drink one quart of spring-water, mixed with one pint of brandy, six Seville oranges, and three ounces of the best double-refined sugar.

Sir Jas. Why, this is punch, doctor?

Gre. Punch, sir! ay, sir; and what's better than punch to make people talk? Never tell me of your julaps, your gruels, your—your—this, and that, and t'other, which are only arts to keep a patient in hand a long time—I love to do a business all at once.

Sir Jas. Doctor, I ask pardon; you shall be obeyed.

[*Gives money.*

Gre. I'll return in the evening, and see what effect it has had on her. But hold; there's another young lady, here, that I must apply some little remedies to.

Maid. Who, me? I was never better in my life, I thank you, sir.

Gre. So much the worse, madam; so much the worse: 'tis very dangerous to be very well; for when one is very well, one has nothing else to do but to take physic and bleed away.

Sir Jas. Oh, strange! What, bleed when one has no distemper?

Gre. It may be strange, perhaps, but 'tis very wholesome. Besides, madam, it is not your case, at present, to be very well: at least, you cannot possibly be well above three days longer; and it is always best to cure a distemper before you have it—or, as we say in Greek, distemprum bestum est curare ante habestum. What I shall prescribe you, at present, is, to take every six hours one of these bolusses:

Maid. Ha, ha, ha! Why, doctor, these look exactly like lumps of loaf-sugar.

Gre. Take one of these bolusses, I say, every

six hours, washing it down with six spoonfuls of the best Holland's geneva.

Sir Jas. Sure you are in jest, doctor! This wench does not shew any symptom of a distemper.

Gre. Sir Jasper, let me tell you, it were not amiss if you yourself took a little lenitive physic; I shall prepare something for you.

Sir Jas. Ha, ha, ha! No, no, doctor! I have escaped both doctors and distempers hitherto, and I am resolved the distemper shall pay me the first visit.

Gre. Say you so, sir? Why, then, if I can get no more patients here, I must even seek them elsewhere; and so humbly beggo te domine domitii veniam groundi foras.

[*Exit* GREGORY.

Sir Jas. Well, this is a physician of vast capacity, but of exceeding odd humours.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The street.*

LEANDER *solus.*

Lean. Ah, Charlotte! thou hast no reason to apprehend my ignorance of what thou endurest, since I can so easily guess thy torment by my own. Oh, how much more justifiable are my fears, when you have not only the command of a parent, but the temptation of fortune to allure you!

AIR.

O cursed power of gold,
For which all honour's sold,
And honesty's no more!
For thee, we often find
The great in leagues combined,
To trick and rob the poor.
By thee, the fool and knave
Transcend the wise and brave,
So absolute thy reign.
Without some help of thine,
The greatest beauties shine,
And lovers plead, in vain.

Enter GREGORY.

Gre. Upon my word, this is a good beginning! and since——

Lean. I have waited for you, doctor, a long time. I'm come to beg your assistance.

Gre. Ay; you have need of assistance, indeed! What a pulse is here! What do you out o' your bed?

[*Feels his pulse.*

Lean. Ha, ha, ha! Doctor, you're mistaken; I am not sick, I assure you.

Gre. How, sir? Not sick! Do you think I don't know when a man is sick, better than he does himself?

Lean. Well, if I have any distemper, it is the love of that young lady, your patient, from whom you just now came; and to whom, if you can convey me, I swear, dear doctor, I shall be effectually cured.

Gre. Do you take me for a pimp, sir? A physician for a pimp?

Lean. Dear sir, make no noise.

Gre. Sir, I will make a noise; you are an impertinent fellow.

Lean. Softly, good sir!

Gre. I shall show you, sir, that I'm not such a sort of a person; and that you are an insolent, saucy——[LEANDER *gives a purse.*]——I'm not speaking to you, sir; but there are certain impertinent fellows in the world, that take people for what they are not——which always puts me, sir, into such a passion, that———

Lean. I ask pardon, sir, for the liberty I have taken.

Gre. O, dear sir; no offence, in the least.—Pray, sir, how am I to serve you?

Lean. This distemper, sir, which you are sent for to cure, is feigned. The physicians have reasoned upon it, according to custom, and have derived it from the brain, from the bowels, from the liver, lungs, lights, and every part of the body: but the true cause of it is love; and is an invention of Charlotte's, to deliver her from a match she dislikes.

Gre. Hum! Suppose you were to disguise yourself as an apothecary?

Lean. I'm not very well known to her father; therefore, believe I may pass upon him securely.

Gre. Go, then, disguise yourself immediately; I'll wait for you here—Ha! Methinks I see a patient. [*Exit* LEANDER.

Enter JAMES *and* DAVY.

Gre. Gad! Matters go on so swimmingly, I'll even continue a physician as long as I live.

James. [*Speaking to* DAVY.]—Fear not; if he relapse into his humours, I'll quickly thrash him into the physician again. Doctor, I have brought you a patient.

Davy. My poor wife, doctor, has kept her bed these six months.—[GRE. *holds out his hand.*]—If your worship would find out some means to cure her——

Gre. What's the matter with her?

Davy. Why, she has had several physicians; one says 'tis the dropsy; another, 'tis the what-d'ye-call-it, the tumpany; a third says, 'tis a slow fever; a fourth says, the rumatiz; a fifth——

Gre. What are the symptoms?

Davy. Symptoms, sir!

Gre. Ay, ay; what does she complain of?

Davy. Why, she is always craving and craving

for drink, eats nothing at all. Then her legs are swelled up as big as a good handsome post; and as cold they be as a stone.

Gre. Come, to the purpose; speak to the purpose, my friend.

[*Holding out his hand.*

Davy. The purpose is, sir, that I am come to ask what your worship pleases to have done with her.

Gre. Psha, psha, psha! I don't understand one word what you mean.

James. His wife is sick, doctor; and he has brought you a guinea for your advice. Give it the doctor, friend.

[DAVY *gives the guinea.*

Gre. Ay, now I understand you; here's a gentleman explains the case. You say your wife is sick of the dropsy?

Davy. Yes, an't please your worship.

Gre. Well, I have made a shift to comprehend your meaning at last: you have the strangest way of describing a distemper. You say your wife is always calling for drink: let her have as much as she desires; she can't drink too much; and, d'ye hear, give her this piece of cheese.

Davy. Cheese, sir!

Gre. Ay, cheese, sir. The cheese, of which this is a part, has cured more people of a dropsy than ever had it.

Davy. I give your worship a thousand thanks; I'll go make her take it immediately.

[*Exit* DAVY.

Gre. Go; and if she dies, be sure to bury her after the best manner you can.

Enter DORCAS.

Dor. I'm like to pay severely for my frolic, if I have lost my husband by it.

Gre. O physic and matrimony! My wife!

Dor. For, though the rogue used me a little roughly, he was as good a workman as any in five miles of his head.

AIR.—*Thomas, I cannot.*

A fig for the dainty civil spouse,
Who's bred at the court of France;
He treats his wife with smiles and bows,
And minds not the good main-chance,
Be Gregory
The man for me,
Though given to many a maggot:
For he would work
Like any Turk;
None like him e'er handled a faggot, a faggot,
None like him e'er handled a faggot!

Gre. What evil stars, in the devil's name, have sent her hither? If I could but persuade her to take a pill or two that I'd give her, I should be a physician to some purpose—Come hider, shild, leta me feela your pulse.

Dor. What have you to do with my pulse?

Gre. I am de French physicion, my dear, and I am to feela de pulse of de pation.

Dor. Yes, but I am no pation, sir; nor want no physician, good doctor Ragou.

Gre. Begar, you must be puta to-bed, and taka de peel; me sal give you de little peel dat sal cure you, as you have more distempre den evere were hered off.

Dor. What's the matter with the fool? If you feel my pulse any more, I shall feel your ears for you.

Gre. Begar, you must taka de peel.

Dor. Begar, I shall not taka de peel.

Gre. I'll take this opportunity to try her.—[*Aside.*]—Maye dear, if you will not letta me cura you, you sala cura me; you sall be my physicion, and I will give you de fee.

[*Holds out a purse.*

Dor. Ay, my stomach does not go against those pills; and what must I do for your fee?

Gre. O, begar! me vill show you; me villa teacha you what you sal doe; you must come kissa me now, you must come kissa me now.

Dor. [*Kisses him.*]—As I live, my very hang dog! I've discovered him in good time, or he had discovered me—[*Aside.*]—Well, doctor, and are you cured now?

Gre. I shall make myself a cuckold presently—[*Aside.*]—Dis is not a proper place, dis is too public; for sud any one pass by while I taka dis phisic, it vill preventa de opperation.

Dor. What physic, doctor?

Gre. In your ear, dat. [*Whispers.*

Dor. And in your ear dat, sirrah.—[*Hitting him a box.*]—Do you dare affront my virtue, you villain! D'ye think the world should bribe me to part with my virtue, my dear virtue! There, take your purse again.

Gre. But where's the gold?

Dor. The gold I'll keep, as an eternal monument of my virtue.

Gre. O what a happy dog am I, to find my wife so virtuous a woman when I least expected it! Oh, my injured dear! Behold your Gregory, your own husband!

Dor. Ha!

Gre. O me! I'm so full of joy, I cannot tell thee more than that I am as much the happiest of men, as thou art the most virtuous of women!

Dor. And art thou really my Gregory? And hast thou any more of these purses?

Gre. No, my dear, I have no more about me; but 'tis probable, in a few days, I may have a hundred; for the strangest accident has happened to me!

Dor. Yes, my dear; but I can tell you whom you are obliged to for that accident: had you

not beaten me this morning, I had never had you beaten into a physician.

Gre. Oh, oh! then 'tis to you I owe all that drubbing?

Dor. Yes, my dear; though I little dreamt of the consequence.

Gre. How infinitely I'm obliged to thee! But hush!

Enter HELLEBORE.

Hel. Are not you the great doctor just come to this town, so famous for curing dumbness?

Gre. Sir, I am he.

Hel. Then, sir, I should be glad of your advice.

Gre. Let me feel your pulse.

Hel. Not for myself, good doctor; I am, myself, sir, a brother of the faculty, what the world calls a mad doctor. I have at present under my care a patient, whom I can by no means prevail with to speak.

Gre. I shall make him speak, sir.

Hel. It will add, sir, to the great reputation you have already acquired; and I am happy in finding you.

Gre. Sir, I am as happy in finding you.—[*Taking him aside.*]—You see that woman, there? she is possessed with a most strange sort of madness, and imagines every man she sees to be her husband. Now, sir, if you will but admit her into your house———

Hel. Most willingly, sir.

Gre. The first thing, sir, you are to do, is to let out thirty ounces of her blood: then, sir, you are to shave off all her hair; all her hair, sir: after which, you are to make a very severe use of your rod, twice a-day; and take a particular care that she have not the least allowance beyond bread and water.

Hel. Sir, I shall readily agree to the dictates of so great a man; nor can I help approving of your method, which is exceeding mild and wholesome.

Gre. [*To his wife.*]—My dear, that gentleman will conduct you to my lodgings. Sir, I beg you will take a particular care of the lady.

Hel. You may depend on't, sir; nothing in my power shall be wanting; you have only to inquire for Dr Hellebore.

Dor. 'Twont be long before I see you, husband?

Hel. Husband! This is as unaccountable a madness as any I have yet met with!

[*Exit* HEL. *with* DOR.

Enter LEANDER.

Gre. I think I shall be revenged on you now, my dear. So, sir.

Lean. I think I make a pretty good apothecary, now.

Gre. Yes, faith; you're almost as good an apothecary, as I'm a physician; and, if you please, I'll convey you to the patient.

Lean. If I did but know a few physical hard words——

Gre. A few physical hard words! Why, in a few hard words consists the science. Would you know as much as the whole faculty in an instant, sir? Come along, come along! Hold; the doctor must always go before the apothecary.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—SIR JASPER'S *house.*

Enter SIR JASPER, CHARLOTTE, *and Maid.*

Sir Jas. Has she made no attempt to speak, yet?

Maid. Not in the least, sir; so far from it, that, as she used to make a sort of noise before, she is now quite silent.

Sir Jas. [*Looking on his watch.*]—'Tis almost the time the doctor promised to return—Oh, he is here! Doctor, your servant.

Enter GREGORY *and* LEANDER.

Gre. Well sir, how does my patient?

Sir Jas. Rather worse, sir, since your prescription.

Gre. So much the better; 'tis a sign that it operates.

Sir Jas. Who is that gentleman, pray, with you?

Gre. An apothecary, sir. Mr Apothecary, I desire you would immediately apply that song I prescribed.

Sir Jas. A song, doctor! Prescribe a song?

Gre. Prescribe a song, sir! Yes, sir; prescribe a song, sir. Is there any thing so strange in that? Did you never hear of pills to purge melancholy? If you understand these things better than I, why did you send for me? 'Sbud, sir, this song would make a stone speak. But, if you please, sir, you and I will confer at some distance, during the application; for this song will do you as much harm as it will do your daughter good. Be sure, Mr Apothecary, to pour it down her ears very closely.

AIR.

Lean. Thus, lovely patient, Charlotte sees
Her dying patient kneel;
Soon cured will be your feigned disease;
But what physician e'er can ease
The torments which I feel?
Think, charming nymph, while I complain,
Ah, think what I endure!
All other remedies are vain;
The lovely cause of all my pain
Can only cause my cure.

Gre. It is, sir, a great and subtle question among the doctors, Whether women are more easy to be cured than men? I beg you would attend to this, sir, if you please——Some say, No; others say, Yes; and, for my part, I say both Yes and No; forasmuch as the incongruity of the opaque humours that meet in the natural temper of women, are the cause that the brutal part will always prevail over the sensible——One sees that the inequality of their opinions depends upon the black movement of the circle of the moon; and as the sun, that darts his rays upon the concavity of the earth, finds——

Char. No, I am not at all capable of changing my opinion.

Sir Jas. My daughter speaks! my daughter speaks! Oh, the great power of physic! Oh, the admirable physician! How can I reward thee for such a service!

Gre. This distemper has given me a most insufferable deal of trouble!

[*Traversing the stage in a great heat, the apothecary following.*]

Char. Yes, sir, I have recovered my speech; but I have recovered it to tell you, that I never will have any husband but Leander.

[*Speaks with great eagerness, and drives* SIR JASPER *round the stage.*

Sir Jas. But——

Char. Nothing is capable to shake the resolution I have taken.

Sir Jas. What!

Char. Your rhetoric is in vain; all your discourses signify nothing.

Sir Jas. I—

Char. I am determined; and all the fathers in the world shall never oblige me to marry contrary to my inclinations.

Sir Jas. I have—

Char. I never will submit to this tyranny; and if I must not have the man I like, I'll die a maid.

Sir Jas. You shall have Mr Dapper——

Char. No—not in any manner—not in the least—not at all! You throw away your breath; you lose your time: you may confine me, beat me, bruise me, destroy me, kill me; do what you will, use me as you will; but I never will consent; nor all your threats, nor all your blows, nor all your ill-usage, never shall force me to consent. So far from giving him my heart, I never will give him my hand: for he is my aversion; I hate the very sight of him; I had rather see the devil! I had rather touch a toad! you may make me miserable another way; but with him you shan't, that I'm resolved!

Gre. There, sir, there! I think we have brought her tongue to a pretty tolerable consistency.

Sir Jas. Consistency, quotha! why, there is no stopping her tongue——Dear doctor, I desire you would make her dumb again.

Gre. That's impossible, sir. All that I can do to serve you is, I can make you deaf, if you please.

Sir Jas. And do you think——

Char. All your reasoning shall never conquer my resolution.

Sir Jas. You shall marry Mr Dapper this evening.

Char. I'll be buried first.

Gre. Stay, sir, stay! let me regulate this affair; it is a distemper that possesses her, and I know what remedy to apply to it.

Sir Jas. Is it possible, sir, that you can cure the distempers of the mind?

Gre. Sir, I can cure any thing. Hark ye, Mr Apothecary! you see that the love she has for Leander is entirely contrary to the will of her father, and that there is no time to lose, and that an immediate remedy is necessary. For my part, I know of but one, which is a dose of purgative running-away, mixt with two drams of pills matrimoniac, and three large handfuls of the arbor vitæ: perhaps she will make some difficulty to take them; but as you are an able apothecary, I shall trust to you for the success. Go, make her walk in the garden; be sure lose no time: to the remedy quick; to the remedy specific!

[*Exeunt* LEANDER *and* CHARLOTTE.

Sir Jas. What drugs, sir, were those I heard you mention, for I don't remember I ever heard them spoke of before?

Gre. They are some, sir, lately discovered by the Royal Society.

Sir Jas. Did you ever see any thing equal to her insolence?

Gre. Daughters are indeed sometimes a little too headstrong.

Sir Jas. You cannot imagine, sir, how foolishly fond she is of that Leander.

Gre. The heat of blood, sir, causes that in young minds.

Sir Jas. For my part, the moment I discovered the violence of her passion, I have always kept her locked up.

Gre. You have done very wisely.

Sir Jas. And I have prevented them from having the least communication together: for who knows what might have been the consequence? Who knows but she might have taken it into her head to have run away with him?

Gre. Very true.

Sir Jas. Ay, sir, let me alone for governing girls; I think I have some reason to be vain on that head; I think I have shewn the world that I understand a little of women—I think I have; and, let me tell you, sir, there is not a little art required. If this girl had had some fathers, they had not kept her out of the hands of so vigilant a lover, as I have done.

Gre. No, certainly, sir.

Enter DORCAS.

Dor. Where is this villain, this rogue, this pretended physician?

Sir Jas. Heyday! What, what, what's the matter now?

Dor. Oh, sirrah, sirrah! Would you have destroyed your wife, you villain? Would you have been guilty of murder, dog?

Gre. Hoity toity! What madwoman is this?

Sir Jas. Poor wretch! For pity's sake, cure her, doctor.

Gre. Sir, I shall not cure her, unless somebody gives me a fee——If you will give me a fee, sir Jasper, you shall see me cure her this instant.

Dor. I'll fee you, you villain——cure me!

AIR.

If you hope, by your skill
To give Dorcas a pill,
You are not a deep politician:
Could wives but be brought
To swallow the draught,
Each husband would be a physician.

Enter JAMES.

James. O sir, undone, undone! Your daughter is run away with her lover Leander, who was here disguised like an apothecary—and this is the rogue of a physician who has contrived all the affair.

Sir Jas. How! am I abused in this manner? Here! who is there? Bid my clerk bring pen, ink, and paper; I'll send this fellow to jail immediately.

James. Indeed, my good doctor, you stand a very fair chance to be hanged for stealing an heiress.

Gre. Yes, indeed, I believe I shall take my degrees now.

Dor. And are they going to hang you, my dear husband?

Gre. You see, my dear wife.

Dor. Had you finished the faggots, it had been some consolation.

Enter LEANDER *and* CHARLOTTE.

Lean. Behold, sir, that Leander, whom you had forbid your house, restores your daughter to your power, even when he had her in his. I will receive her, sir, only at your hands——I have received letters, by which I have learnt the death of an uncle, whose estate far exceeds that of your intended son-in-law.

Sir Jas. Sir, your virtue is beyond all estates; and I give you my daughter with all the pleasure in the world.

Lean. Now my fortune makes me happy indeed, my dearest Charlotte!——And, doctor, I'll make thy fortune, too.

Gre. If you would be so kind to make me a physician in earnest, I should desire no other fortune.

Lean. Faith, doctor, I wish I could do that, in return for your having made me an apothecary; but I'll do as well for thee, I warrant.

Dor. So, so! our physician, I find, has brought about fine matters. And is it not owing to me, sirrah, that you have been a physician at all?

Sir Jas. May I beg to know whether you are a physician or not—or what the devil you are?

Gre. I think, sir, after the miraculous cure you have seen me perform, you have no reason to ask whether I am a physician or no—And for you, wife, I'll henceforth have you behave with all deference to my greatness.

Dor. Why, thou puffed up fool, I could have made as good a physician myself; the cure was owing to the apothecary, not the doctor.

AIR.—*We've cheated the Parson, &c,*

When tender young virgins look pale, and complain,
You may send for a dozen great doctors in vain:
All give their opinion, and pocket their fees;
Each writes her a cure, though all miss her disease;
Powders, drops,
Julaps, slops,
A cargo of poison from physical shops.
Though they physic to death the unhappy poor maid,
What's that to the doctor——since he must be paid?
Would you know how you may manage her right?
Our doctor has brought you a nostrum to-night,
Can never vary,
Nor miscarry,
If the lover be but the apothecary.
Chorus.—Can never vary, &c.

CHRONONHOTONTHOLOGOS.

BY

CAREY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.		WOMEN.
CHRONONHOTONTHOLOGOS, *king of Queerummania.*		FADLADINIDA, *queen of Queerummania.*
BOMBARDINIAN, *his general.*		TATLANTHE, *her favourite.*
ALDIBORONTIPHOSCOPHORNIO,	} *courtiers.*	*Two ladies of the court.*
RIGDUM-FUNNIDOS.	}	*Two ladies of pleasure.*
Captain of the guards.		*Venus.*
Herald.		*Cupid.*
Cook.		*Guards and attendants, &c.*
Doctor.		
King of the fiddlers.		
King of the Antipodes.		

Scene—Queerummania.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An anti-chamber in the palace.*

Enter RIGDUM-FUNNIDOS *and* ALDIBORONTIPHOSCOPHORNIO.

Rig-Fun. Aldiborontiphoscophornio!
Where left you Chrononhotonthologos?
Aldi. Fatigued with the tremendous toils of war,
Within his tent, on downy couch succumbent,
Himself he unfatigues with gentle slumbers:
Lulled by the cheerful trumpets' gladsome clangour,
The noise of drums, and thunder of artillery,
He sleeps supine amidst the din of war:
And yet, 'tis not definitively sleep;
Rather a kind of doze, a waking slumber,
That sheds a stupefaction o'er his senses:
For now he nods and snores; anon he starts;
Then nods and snores again: If this be sleep,
Tell me, ye gods! what mortal man's awake?
What says my friend to this?
Rig-Fun. Say! I say he sleeps dog-sleep:
What a plague would you have me say?
Aldi. O impious thought! O cursed insinuation!
As if great Chrononhotonthologos,
To animals detestable and vile,
Had aught the least similitude!
Rig-Fun. My dear friend, you entirely misapprehend me: I did not call the king dog by craft; I was only going to tell you, that the soldiers have just now received their pay, and are all as drunk as so many swabbers.
Aldi. Give orders instantly, that no more money
Be issued to the troops: Mean time, my friend,
Let the baths be filled with seas of coffee,
To stupefy their souls into sobriety.

Rig-Fun. I fancy you had better banish the sutlers, and blow the Geneva casks to the devil.

Aldi. Thou counsellest well, my Rigdum-Funnidos,
And reason seems to father thy advice:
But, soft!—The king, in pensive contemplation,
Seems to resolve on some important doubt;
His soul, too copious for his earthly fabric,
Starts forth, spontaneous, in soliloquy,
And makes his tongue the midwife of his mind.
Let us retire, lest we disturb his solitude.
[*They retire.*

Enter KING.

King. This god of sleep is watchful to torment me,
And rest is grown a stranger to my eyes:
Sport not with Chrononhotonthologos,
Thou idle slumberer, thou detested Somnus:
For, if thou dost, by all the waking powers,
I'll tear thine eye-balls from their leaden-sockets,
And force thee to out-stare eternity!
[*Exit in a huff.*

Re-enter RIGDUM *and* ALDIBORONTI.

Rig. The king is in a most cursed passion! Pray, who the devil is this Mr Somnus, he's so angry withal?

Aldi. The son of Chaos and of Erebus,
Incestuous pair! brother of Mors relentless,
Whose speckled robe, and wings of blackest hue,
Astonish all mankind with hideous glare;
Himself with sable plumes, to men benevolent,
Brings downy slumbers, and refreshing sleep.

Rig. This gentleman may come of a very good family, for aught I know; but I would not be in his place for the world.

Aldi. But, lo! the king, his footsteps this way bending,
His cogitative faculties immersed
In cogibundity of cogitation:
Let silence close our folding-doors of speech,
Till apt attention tell our heart the purport
Of this profound profundity of thought.

Re-enter King, Nobles, and Attendants, &c.

King. It is resolved——Now, Somnus, I defy thee,
And from mankind ampute thy cursed dominion.
These royal eyes thou never more shalt close.
Henceforth, let no man sleep, on pain of death:
Instead of sleep, let pompous pageantry
Keep all mankind eternally awake.
Bid Harlequino decorate the stage
With all magnificence of decoration:
Giants and giantesses, dwarfs and pygmies,
Songs, dances, music in its amplest order,
Mimes, pantomimes, and all the mimic motion
Of scene deceptiovisive and sublime.

The flat scene draws. The king is seated, and a grand pantomime entertainment is performed, in the midst of which, enters a captain of the guard.

Capt. To arms! to arms! great Chrononhotonthologos!
The Antipodean powers, from realms below,
Have burst the solid entrails of the earth;
Gushing such cataracts of forces forth,
This world is too incopious to contain them:
Armies on armies march, in form stupendous;
Not like our earthly regions, rank by rank,
But teer o'er teer, high piled from earth to heaven;
A blazing bullet, bigger than the sun,
Shot from a huge and monstrous culverin,
Has laid your royal citadel in ashes.

King. Peace, coward! were they wedged like golden ingots,
Or pent so close, as to admit no vacuum,
One look from Chrononhotonthologos
Shall scare them into nothing. Rigdum-Funnidos,
Bid Bombardinian draw his legions forth,
And meet us in the plains of Queerummania.
This very now ourselves shall there conjoin him:
Mean time, bid all the priests prepare their temples
For rites of triumph: Let the singing singers,
With vocal voices, most vociferous,
In sweet vociferation, out-vociferize
Even sound itself. So be it as we have ordered.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A magnificent apartment.*

Enter QUEEN, TATLANTHE, *and two ladies.*

Queen. Day's curtain's drawn, the morn begins to rise,
And waking nature rubs her sleepy eyes:
The pretty little fleecy bleating flocks
In baa's harmonious warble through the rocks:
Night gathers up her shades, in sable shrouds,
And whispering oziers tattle to the clouds.
What think you, ladies, if an hour we kill,
At basset, ombre, picquet, or quadrille?

Tat. Your majesty was pleased to order tea.

Queen. My mind is altered; bring some ratifia.
[*They are served round with a dram.*
I have a famous fiddler sent from France.
Bid him come in. What think ye of a dance?

Enter Fiddler.

Fid. Thus to your majesty, says the suppliant muse,
Would you a solo or sonata chuse?
Or bold concerto, or soft Siciliana,
Alla Francese overo in gusto Romano?
When you command, 'tis done as soon as spoke.

Queen. A civil fellow!——play us the Black Joak. [*Music plays*

[*Queen and Ladies dance the Black Joak.*

So much for dancing; now let's rest a while.
Bring in the tea-things; does the kettle boil?

Tat. The water bubbles and the tea-cups skip,
Through eager hope to kiss your royal lip.

[*Tea brought in.*

Queen. Come, ladies, will you please to chuse your tea;
Or green Imperial, or Pekoe Bohea?

1st Lady. Never, no, never sure on earth was seen,
So gracious, sweet, and affable a queen!

2d Lady. She is an angel!

1st Lady. She's a goddess rather!

Tat. She's angel, queen, and goddess, altogether!

Queen. Away! you flatter me.

1st Lady. We don't indeed:
Your merit does our praise by far exceed.

Queen. You make me blush: Pray, help me to a fan.

1st Lady. That blush becomes you.———

Tat. Would I were a man!

Queen. I'll hear no more of these fantastic airs. [*Bell rings.*

The bell rings in: Come, ladies, let's to prayers.

[*They dance off.*

SCENE III.—*An anti-chamber.*

Enter RIGDUM *and* ALDIBORONTI.

Rig. Egad, we're in the wrong box! Who the devil would have thought that Chrononhotonthologos should be at that mortal sight of Tippodeans? Why, there's not a mother's child of them to be seen! 'egad, they footed it away as fast as their hands could carry them; but they have left their king behind them. We have him safe, that's one comfort.

Aldi. Would he were still at amplest liberty!
For, oh! my dearest Rigdum-Funnidos,
I have a riddle to unriddle to thee,
Shall make thee stare thyself into a statue.
Our queen's in love with this Antipodean.

Rig The devil she is! Well, I see mischief is going forward with a vengeance!

Aldi. But, lo! the conqueror comes, all crowned with conquest!
A solemn triumph graces his return.
Let's grasp the forelock of this apt occasion,
To greet the victor, in his flow of glory.

A grand triumph.—Enter CHRONONHOTONTHOLOGOS, *guards and attendants, &c. met by* RIGDUM-FUNNIDOS *and* ALDIBORONTIPHOSCOPHORNIO.

Aldi. All hail to Chrononhotonthologos!
Thrice trebly welcome to your loyal subjects!
Myself and faithful Rigdum-Funnidos,
Lost in a labyrinth of love and loyalty,
Intreat you to inspect our inmost souls,
And read, in them, what tongue can never utter.

Chro. Aldiborontiphoscophornio,
To thee, and gentle Rigdum-Funnidos,
Our gratulations flow in streams unbounded:
Our bounty's debtor to your loyalty,
Which shall, with interest, be repaid e're long.
But where's our queen? where's Fadladinida?
She should be foremost in this gladsome train,
To grace our triumph; but, I see she slights me.
This haughty queen shall be no longer mine,
I'll have a sweet and gentle concubine.

Rig. Now, my dear little Phoscophorny, for a swinging lie to bring the queen off, and I'll run with it to her this minute, that we may all be in a say. Say she has got the thorough-go-nimble.

[*Whispers, and steals off.*

Aldi. Speak not, great Chrononhotonthologos,
In accents so injuriously severe,
Of Fadladinida, your faithful queen:
By me she sends an embassy of love,
Sweet blandishments, and kind congratulations,
But, cannot, Oh! she cannot, come herself.

King. Our rage is turned to fear: What ails the queen?

Aldi. A sudden diarrhæa's rapid force
So stimulates the peristaltic motion,
That she by far out-does her late out-doing,
And all conclude her royal life in danger.

King. Bid the physicians of the world assemble
In consultation, solemn and sedate:
More to corroborate their sage resolves,
Call from their graves the learned men of old:
Galen, Hippocrates, and Paracelsus;
Doctors, apothecaries, surgeons, chemists,
All, all attend and see they bring their medicines;
Whole magazines of galli-potted nostrums,
Materialized in pharmaceutic order!
The man that cures our queen shall have our empire. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A garden.*

Enter TATLANTHE *and* QUEEN.

Queen. Heigh ho! my heart!
Tat. What ails my gracious queen?
Queen. O would to Venus I had never seen—
Tat. Seen what, my royal mistress?
Queen. Too, too much!
Tat. Did it affright you?
Queen. No; 'tis nothing such.
Tat. What was it, madam?
Queen. Really, I don't know.
Tat. It must be something?
Queen. No!
Tat. Or nothing?
Queen. No!
Tat. Then, I conclude, of course, since it was neither,
Nothing and something jumbled well together.
Queen. Oh! my Tatlanthe, have you never seen—
Tat. Can I guess what, unless you tell, my queen?
Queen. The king, I mean?
Tat. Just now returned from war,
He rides like Mars in his triumphal car.
Conquest precedes, with laurels in his hand;
Behind him Fame does on her tripos stand;
Her golden trump shrill through the air she sounds,
Which rends the earth, and thence to Heaven rebounds;
Trophies and spoils innumerable grace
This triumph, which all triumphs does deface:
Haste then, great queen! your hero thus to meet,
Who longs to lay his laurels at your feet.
Queen. Art mad, Tatlanthe? I meant no such thing.
Your talk's distasteful.
Tat. Didn't you name the king?
Queen. I did, Tatlanthe, but it was not thine;
The charming king I mean, is only mine.
Tat. Who else, who else, but such a charming fair,
In Chrononhotonthologos should share?
The queen of beauty, and the god of arms,
In him and you united, blend their charms.
Oh! had you seen him, how he dealt out death,
And, at one stroke, robbed thousands of their breath:
While on the slaughtered heaps himself did rise,
In pyramids of conquest to the skies:
The gods all hailed, and fain would have him stay;
But your bright charms have called him thence away.
Queen. This does my utmost indignation raise:
You are too pertly lavish in his praise.
Leave me for ever! [TATLANTHE *kneeling.*
Tat. Oh! what shall I say?
Do not, great queen, your anger thus display!
O frown me dead! let me not live to hear
My gracious queen and mistress so severe!
I've made some horrible mistake, no doubt!
Oh! tell me what it is!
Queen. No, find it out.
Tat. No, I will never leave you; here I'll grow,
Till you some token of forgiveness show:
Oh! all ye powers above, come down, come down!
And from her brow dispel that angry frown.
Queen. Tatlanthe, rise; you have pravailed at last:
Offend no more, and I'll excuse what's past.
[TATLANTHE *aside, rising.*
Tat. Why, what a fool was I, not to perceive her passion for the topsy-turvy king, the gentleman that carries his head where his heels should be? But I must tack about I see.
[*To the* QUEEN.
Excuse me, gracious madam! if my heart
Bears sympathy with your's in every part;
With you alike I sorrow and rejoice,
Approve your passion, and commend your choice;
The captive king———
Queen. That's he! that's he! that's he!
I'd die ten thousand deaths to set him free:
Oh! my Tatlanthe! have you seen his face,
His air, his shape, his mien, his every grace?
In what a charming attitude he stands!
How prettily he foots it with his hands!
Well, to his arms, no, to his legs I fly,
For I must have him, if I live or die. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A bed chamber.*

CHRONONHOTONTHOLOGOS *asleep.*

Rough music. viz. Salt-boxes and rolling-pins grid-irons and tongs; sow-gelders' horns, marrow-bones and cleavers, &c. &c.
[*He wakes.*

Chron. What heavenly sounds are these that charm my ears!
Sure 'tis the music of the tuneful spheres.

Enter Captain of the guards.

Capt. A messenger from general Bombardinian
Craves instance audience of your majesty.
Chron. Give him admittance.

Enter Herald.

Her. Long life to Chrononhotonthologos!
Your faithful general, Bombardinian,
Sends you his tongue, transplanted in my mouth,

To pour his soul out in your royal ears.
Chron. Then use thy master's tongue with reverence,
Nor waste it in thine own loquacity,
But briefly, and at large, declare thy message.
Her. Suspend a-while, great Chrononhotonthologos,
The fate of empires and the toils of war;
And in my tent let's quaff Phalernian wine,
Till our souls mount and emulate the gods.
Two captive females, beauteous as the morn,
Submissive to your wishes, court your option.
Haste then, great king, to bless us with your presence.
Our scouts already watch the wished approach,
Which shall be welcomed by the drum's dread rattle,
The cannon's thunder, and the trumpet's blast;
While I, in front of mighty myrmidons,
Receive my king in all the pomp of war.
Chron. Tell him I come; my flying steed prepare:
Ere thou art half on horse-back I'll be there.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A prison. The king of the Antipodes discovered asleep on a couch.*

Enter QUEEN.

Queen. Is this a place—Oh! all ye gods above!
This a reception for the man I love?
See in what sweet tranquillity he sleeps,
While nature's self at his confinement weeps.
Rise, lovely monarch! see your friend appear,
No Chrononhotonthologos is here;
Command your freedom, by this sacred ring;
Then command me: What says my charming king?
[*She puts the ring in his mouth, he bends the sea-crab, and makes a roaring noise.*
Queen. What can this mean! he lays his feet at mine,
Is this of love or hate his country's sign?
Ah! wretched queen! how hapless is thy lot,
To love a man that understands thee not!
Oh! lovely Venus, goddess all divine!
And gentle Cupid, that sweet son of thine,
Assist, assist me, with your sacred art,
And teach me to obtain this stranger's heart.

Venus descends in her chariot, and sings.

AIR.

Ven. See Venus does attend thee,
My dilding, my dolding,
Love's goddess will befriend thee,
Lilly bright and shinee.
With pity and compassion,
My dilding, my dolding,
She sees thy tender passion,
Lilly, &c. da capo.

AIR.—*Changes.*

To thee I yield my power divine,
Dance over the lady Lee.
Demand whate'er thou wilt, 'tis thine,
My gay lady.
Take this magic wand in hand,
Dance, &c.
All the world's at thy command,
My gay, &c. da capo.

Cupid descends, and sings.

AIR.

Are you a widow, or are you a wife?
Gilly flower, gentle rosemary.
Or are you a maiden, so fair and so bright?
As the dew that flies over the mulberry tree.
Queen. Would I were a widow, as I am a wife!
Gilly flower, &c.
But I'm, to my sorrow, a maiden as bright,
As the dew, &c.
Cupid. You shall be a widow before it is night,
Gilly flower, &c.
No longer a maiden so fair and so bright,
As the dew, &c.
Two jolly young husbands your person shall share,
Gilly flower, &c.
And twenty fine babies all lovely and fair,
As the dew, &c.
Queen. O thanks, Mr Cupid! for this your good news,
Gilly flower, &c.
What woman alive would such favours refuse?
While the dew, &c.
[*Venus and Cupid re-ascend; the queen goes off, and the king of the Antipodes follows, walking on his hands.*

SCENE IV.—BOMBARDINIAN'S *tent.*

King and BOMBARDINIAN *at a table, with two ladies.*

Bom. This honour, royal sir, so royalizes
The royalty of your most royal actions,
The dumb can only utter forth your praise;
For we, who speak, want words to tell our meaning.
Here! fill the goblet with Phalernian wine,
And, while our monarch drinks, bid the shrill trumpet
Tell all the gods, that we propine their healths.
King. Hold, Bombardinian! I esteem it fit,
With so much wine, to eat a little bit.
Bom. See that the table instantly be spread,

With all that art and nature can produce.
Traverse from pole to pole; sail round the globe,
Bring every eatable that can be eat;
The king shall eat, though all mankind be starved.

Cook. I am afraid his majesty will be starved, before I can run round the world, for a dinner; besides, where's the money?

King. Ha! dost thou prattle, contumacious slave?
Guards, seize the villain! broil him, fry him, stew him;
Ourselves shall eat him out of mere revenge.

Cook. O, pray your majesty, spare my life; there's some nice cold pork in the pantry: I'll hash it for your majesty in a minute.

Chron. Be thou first hashed in hell, audacious slave!
[*Kills him, and turns to* BOMBARDINIAN.
Hashed pork! shall Chrononhotonthologos
Be fed with swine's flesh, and at second-hand?
Now, by the gods! thou dost insult us, general!

Bom. The gods can witness, that I little thought
Your majesty to other flesh than this
Had aught the least propensity.
[*Points to the ladies.*

King. Is this a dinner for a hungry monarch?

Bom. Monarchs as great as Chrononhotonthologos,
Have made a very hearty meal of worse.

King. Ha! Traitor! dost thou brave me to my teeth?
Take this reward, and learn to mock thy master.
[*Strikes him.*

Bom. A blow! shall Bombardinian take a blow?
Blush! Blush, thou sun! Start back, thou rapid ocean!
Hills! vales! seas! mountains! all commixing, crumble,
And into chaos pulverize the world;
For Bombardinian has received a blow,
And Chrononhotonthologos shall die. [*Draws.*

[*The women run off, crying, Help, Murder, &c.*

King. What means the traitor?

Bom. Traitor, in thy teeth!
Thus I defy thee!
[*They fight; he kills the king.*
Ha! What have I done?
Go, call a coach, and let a coach be called;
And let the man that calls it be the caller;
And, in his calling, let him nothing call,
But coach! coach! coach! Oh! for a coach, ye gods! [*Exit raving.*

Returns with a Doctor.

Bom. How fares your majesty?

Doc. My lord, he's dead.

Bom. Ha! dead! impossible! it cannot be!
I would not believe it, though himself should swear it.
Go, join his body to his soul again,
Or, by this light, thy soul shall quit thy body!

Doc. My lord, he's far beyond the power of physic;
His soul has left his body, and this world.

Bom. Then go to the other world and fetch it back, [*Kills him.*
And, if I find thou triflest with me there,
I'll chase thy shade through myriads of orbs,
And drive thee far beyond the verge of nature.
Ha! Call'st thou, Chrononhotonthologos?
I come! your faithful Bombardinian comes!
He comes, in worlds unknown, to make new wars,
And gain thee empires numerous as the stars.
[*Kills himself.*

Enter QUEEN *and others.*

Aldi. O horrid! horrible! and horridest horror!
Our king! our general! our cook! our doctor!
All dead! stone dead! irrevocably dead!
Oh!—— [*All groan, a tragedy groan.*

Queen. My husband dead! Ye gods! What is't you mean,
To make a widow of a virgin queen?
For, to my great misfortune, he, poor king,
Has left me so; is not that a wretched thing?

Tat. Why, then, dear madam! make no farther pother,
Were I your majesty, I would try another.

Queen. I think 'tis best to follow thy advice.

Tat. I'll fit you with a husband in a trice:
Here's Rigdum-Funnidos, a proper man;
If any one can please a queen, he can.

Rig. Ay, that I can, and please your majesty.
So, ceremonies apart, let us proceed to business.

Queen. Oh! but the mourning takes up all my care;
I am at a loss what kind of weeds to wear.

Rig. Never talk of mourning, madam.
One ounce of mirth is worth a pound of sorrow.
Let us bed to-night, and then we'll wed to-morrow.
I'll make thee a great man, my little Phoscophony. [*To* ALDI. *aside.*

Aldi. I scorn your bounty; I'll be king, or nothing.
Draw, miscreant! draw!

Rig. No, sir, I'll take the law.
[*Runs behind the Queen.*

Queen. Well, gentlemen, to make the matter easy,
I'll have you both; and that, I hope will please ye.
And now, Tatlanthe, thou art all my care:

Where shall I find thee such another pair?
Pity that you, who've served so long, so well,
Should die a virgin, and lead apes in hell.
Choose for yourself, dear girl, our empire round,
Your portion is twelve hundred thousand pound.
Aldi. Here! take these dead and bloody corpse away;
Make preparation for our wedding-day.
Instead of sad solemnity, and black,
Our hearts shall swim in claret, and in sack.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

HONEST YORKSHIREMAN.

BY

CAREY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
GAYLOVE, *a young barrister, in love with* ARBELLA.	ARBELLA, *niece to* MUCKWORM, *in love with* GAYLOVE.
MUCKWORM, *uncle and guardian to* ARBELLA.	COMBRUSH, *her maid, a pert one.*
SAPSKULL, *a country 'squire, intended for* ARBELLA.	
SLANGO, *servant to* GAYLOVE, *an arch fellow.*	
BLUNDER, *servant to* SAPSKULL, *a clown.*	

Scene—A country village.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An apartment in* MUCKWORM'S *house.*

Enter ARBELLA *and* COMBRUSH.

AIR.—*Set by* SIGNIOR PORPORA.

Ar. GENTLE Cupid! seek my lover,
Waft a thousand sighs from me!
All my tender fears discover,
Bid him haste!——
O bid him haste, and set me free!

Combrush!

Com. Ma'am!

Ar. No news from Gaylove yet?

Com. Not a tittle, ma'am.

Ar. It quite distracts me!

Com. And every body else, ma'am; for when you are out of humour, one may as well be out of the world. Well, this love is a strange thing; when once it gets possession of a young lady's heart, it turns her head quite topsy-turvy, and makes her out of humour with every body—— I'm sure I have reason to say so.

Ar. Prithee leave your nonsense, and tell me something of Gaylove.

Com. All I can tell you, ma'am, is, that he is stark staring mad, for love of you. But this confounded uncle of yours——

Ar. What of him?

Com. Has just received news of the arrival of a rich country squire out of Yorkshire; which country squire is cut out for your husband.

Ar. They that cut a husband out for me, shall cut him out of better stuff, I assure you.

AIR—*In vain, dear Chloe.*

Shall I stand still and tamely see,
Such Smithfield bargains made of me?

Is not my heart my own?
I hate, I scorn their clownish squire,
Nor lord, nor duke, do I desire,
But him I love alone.

Com. Well said, ma'am; I love a woman of spirit.

AIR.—*Hark away! 'tis the merry toned horn.*

Why should women so much be controuled?
Why should men with our rights make so bold?
Let the battle 'twixt sexes be tried,
We shall soon prove the strongest side.
Then stand to your arms,
And trust to your charms,
Soon whining and pining,
The men will pursue;
But if you grow tame,
They'll but make you their game,
And prove perfect tyrants
If once they subdue. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A street near the house.*

Enter GAYLOVE *and* SLANGO.

Gay. No way to get at her?

Slang. The devil a bit, sir; old Muckworm has cut off all communication: But I have worse news to tell you yet.

Gay. That's impossible.

Slang. Your mistress is to be married to another, and that quickly.

Gay. Married! you surprise me—to whom?

Slang. To 'squire Sapskull, a Yorkshire gentleman, of a very great estate.

Gay. Confusion! Can she be so false? To Sapskull! I know him well, of Sapskull-Hall—I was born within a mile and a half of the place; his father is the greatest rogue in the county, the very man I am now suing for what my late brother mortgaged to him, when I was student at Cambridge. Is he not content to withhold my right from me, but he must seek to rob me of the only happiness I desire in life?

AIR.—*The charms of Florimel.*

My charming Arabell,
To make thee mine secure,
What would not I endure!
'Tis past the power of tongue to tell,
The love I bear my Arabell.

No human force shall quell
My passion for my dear,
Can love be too sincere?
I'd sooner take of life farewel,
Then of my dearest Arabell.

Is there no way to prevent this match? You were not used to be thus barren of invention.

Slang. Nor am I now, sir; your humble servant has invented already—and such a scheme!

Gay. How! which way, dear Slango?

Slang. Why thus——I must personate Arbella, (with this sweet face) and you her uncle, under which disguises we may intercept the country 'squire, and get his credentials; equipt with which——I leave you to guess the rest.

Gay. Happy invention! Success attend it!

Slang. I can't say Amen, though I'd do any thing to serve you. Do you know the result, sir? no less than the forfeiture of your dear liberty. Have you forgot the song of The Dog and the Bone?

AIR.—*When the bright god of day.*

Whoe'er to a wife
Is linked for his life,
Is placed in a wretched condition:
Though plagued with her tricks,
Like a blister she sticks,
And death is his only physician.

To trifle and toy,
May give a man joy.
When summoned by love, or by beauty;
But, where is the bliss in
Our conjugal kissing,
When passion is prompted by duty?

The cur who possessed
Of mutton the best,
A bone he could leave at his pleasure:
But if to his tail
'Tis tied, without fail,
He's harassed and plagued beyond measure.

Gay. I am now of a contrary opinion: Vice looks so hateful, and virtue so amiable in my eye, especially as 'tis the ready road to true happiness, I am resolved to pursue its paths. A regular life, and a good wife for me.

AIR.—*Answer to the above song.*

To the same tune.

That man, who for life
Is blest in a wife,
Is sure in a happy condition;
Go things how they will,
She sticks by him still,
She's comforter, friend, and physician.

Pray, where is the joy,
To trifle and toy,
Yet dread some disaster from beauty?
But sweet is the bliss,
Of a conjugal kiss,
Where love mingles pleasure with duty.

One extravagant whore,
Shall cost a man more,
Than twenty good wives who are saving;
For wives they will spare,
That their children may share,
But whores are eternally craving.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another street.*

Enter SAPSKULL *and* BLUNDER, *staring about.*

Sap. Wuns-lent! what a mortal big place this same London is! ye mun ne'er see end on't, for sure——Housen upon housen, folk upon folk ———one would admire where they did grow all of 'em.

Blun. Ay, master, and this is nought to what you'll see an by; and ye go to Tower ye mun see great hugeous ships as tall as housen: Then ye mun go to playhousen, and there be no less nor six of them, a hopeful company; o' my conscience! There you'll see your comical tragedies, and your uproars, and roratoribusses, and hear Fardinello, that sings Solfa better nor our minister choir men: And more nor that, ye mun ha' your choice of the prattiest lasses, ye e'er set e'en on.

Sap. By the mass, and I'll be somebody among them—So I will—but how mun we find out this same sir Penurious Muckworm?

Blun. Ye mun look to letter for that.

Sap. Letter says, G-r-o-z Groz-ve-n-e-r, near Grozveneer square;——but how mun ye know where this same Grosveneer squire is?

Blun. Why ye mun ask ostler for that, he'll set you right for sure: For your London ostlers are wiser by half than our country justasses.

Sap. Ay, Blunder, every thing's fine in London.

AIR.—*London is a fine town.*

O London is a dainty place,
A great and gallant city,
For all the streets are paved with gold,
And all the folks are witty.

And there's your lords and ladies fine,
That ride in coach and six,
That nothing drink but claret wine,
And talk of politics.

And there's your beaux, with powdered cloaths,
Bedaubed from head to chin;
Their pocket holes adorned with gold,
But not one souse within.

And there's the English actor goes
With many a hungry belly,
While heaps of gold are forced, God wot,
On signior Farrinelli.

And there's your dames, of dainty frames,
With skins as white as milk,
Drest every day, in garments gay,
Of satin, and of silk.

And if your mind be so inclined,
To have them in your arms.
Pull out a handsome purse of gold,
They can't resist its charms.

Enter GAYLOVE, *as* MUCKWORM.

Gay. Welcome to London, dear squire Sapskull! I hope your good father is well, and all at Sapskull-hall?

Sap. Did ye e'er hear the like, Blunder? This old gentleman knows me as well as I know myself. [*Aside to* BLUNDER.

Blun. Ay, master, you Londoners know every thing.

Gay. I had letters of your coming, and was resolved to meet you.

Sap. Pray, sir, who may you be, an' I may be so bold?

Gay. My name, sir, is Muckworm.

Sap. What, sir Penurious Muckworm?

Gay. So they call me.

Sap. Sir, if your name be sir Penurious Muckworm, my name is Samuel Sapskull, jun. esq. son of sir Samuel Sapskull, of Sapskull-hall, in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Gay. Sir, I am no stranger to your family and merit; for which reason I sent for you to town, to marry my niece with 6000l. fortune, and a pretty girl into the bargain.

Blun. Look ye there, master! [*Aside to* BLUNDER.

Sap. Hold your peace, you blockhead! [*Aside to* SAPSKULL.

Gay. But how may I be sure, that you are the very squire Sapskull I sent for? Have you no letters, no credentials?

Sap. Open the portmantell, Blunder——Yes, sir, I ha' brought all my tackle with me. Here, sir, is a letter from father. [*Gives a letter.*] And here, sir, are deeds and writings, to shew what you mun ha' to trust to: And here, sir, is marriage-settlement, signed by father, in fit case young gentlewoman and I likes one another.

Gay. Sir, she can't chuse but admire so charming a person. There is but one obstacle that I know of.

Sap. What may that be, an I may be so bold?

Gay. Your habit, sir; your habit.

Sap. Why, sir, 'twas counted wondrous fine in our country last parlementeering time.

Gay. O, sir, but it's old fashioned now, and my niece loves every thing to the tip-top of the mode. But if you'll go along with me, I'll equip you in an instant.

AIR.—*Set by the author.*

Come hither, my country squire,
Take friendly instruction by me;
The lords shall admire
Thy taste in attire,
The ladies shall languish for thee.

CHORUS.

Such flaunting,
Gallanting,
And jaunting,
Such frolicking thou shalt see,
Thou ne'er like a clown,
Shalt quit London sweet town,
To live in thine own country.

A skimming dish hat provide,
With little more brim than lace,
Nine hairs on a side,
To a pig's tail tied,
Will set off thy jolly broad face.
Such flaunting, &c.

III.

Go, get thee a footman's frock,
A cudgel quite up to thy nose,
Then friz like a shock,
And plaister thy block,
And buckle thy shoes at thy toes.
Such flaunting, &c.

A brace of ladies fair,
To pleasure thee shall strive,
In a chaise and pair,
They shall take the air,
And thou in the box shalt drive.
Such flaunting, &c.

Convert thy acres to cash,
And saw thy timber-trees down,
Who would keep such trash,
And not cut a flash,
Or enjoy the delights of the town.

CHORUS.

Such flaunting,
Gallanting,
And jaunting,
Such frolicking thou shalt see,
Thou ne'er like a clown
Shall quit London sweet town,
To live in thine own country.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An apartment.*

Enter ARBELLA *and* COMBRUSH.

AIR.—*Set by the author.*

Arb. In vain you mention pleasure,
To one confused like me,
Ah, what is wealth or treasure,
Compared to liberty?

O thou, for whom I languish,
And dost the same for me,
Relieve a virgin's anguish,
And set a captive free.

Enter MUCKWORM.

Muck. Come, there's a good girl, don't be in the pouts, now.

Com. I think it's enough to put any young lady in the pouts, to deny her the man she likes, and force her to marry a great looby Yorkshire tike. In short, sir, my mistress don't like him, and won't have him. Nay, I don't like him, and tell you flat and plain she shan't have him.

Muck. Shan't have him, Mrs Snap-Dragon!

Com. No, shan't have him, sir; if I were she, I would see who should force me to marry against my will.

Muck. Was ever such an impudent hussy! But I'll send you packing. Get out of my house, you saucy baggage!

Arb. Sir, though you have the care of my estate, you have no command over my servants:—I am your ward, not your slave; if you use me thus, you'll constrain me to chuse another guardian.

Muck. [*Aside.*] A gypsey! who taught her this cunning? I must hasten this match, or lose 1000*l.* by the bargain. [*To* ARB.] What a bustle is here with a peevish love-sick girl! Pray, child, have you learnt Cupid's catechism? Do you know what love is?

Arb. Yes, sir———

AIR.—*Set by the author.*

Love's a gentle generous passion,
Source of all sublime delight,
When, with mutual inclination,
Two fond hearts in one unite.

What are titles, pomp or riches,
If compared with true content?
That false joy which now bewitches,
When obtained we may repent.

Lawless passion brings vexation,
But a chaste and constant love,
Is the glorious emulation,
Of the blisful state above.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Sir, one squire Sapskull, out of Yorkshire, desires to speak with you.

Muck. I am glad he's come—desire him to walk in.

[*Servant goes out, and returns with* GAYLOVE, *dressed in* SAPSKULL'S *clothes.*

Gay. Sir, an' your name be sir Penurious Muckworm?

Muck. Sir, I have no other; may I crave yours?

Gay. Samuel Sapskull, jun. esq. at your lordship's service.

Muck. A very mannerly, towardly youth, and a comely one, I assure you. [*To* ARBELLA.

Gay. Pray, sir, an' I may be so bold, which of these two pretty lasses is your niece, and my wife, that mun be?

Ar. What a brute is this? Before I would have such a wretch for a husband, I would die ten thousand deaths.

Muck. Which do you like best, sir?

Gay. Marry, an' I were to chuse, I would take them both.

Muck. Very courtly, indeed. I see the squire is a wag.

Comb. Both! I'll assure you, sauce-box! the worst is too good for you.

AIR.—*Gilly-flower, gentle rosemary.*

Why how now, sir Clown, dost set up for a wit?
Gilly-flower, gentle rosemary:
If here you should wed you are certainly bit,
As the dew it flies over the mulberry tree.

If such a fine lady to wife you should take,
Gilly-flower, gentle rosemary:
Your heart, head, and horns, shall as certainly ake,
As the dew it flies over the mulberry tree.

Muck. Insufferable assurance! affront a gentleman in my house! Never mind her, sir; she's none of my niece; only a pert slut of a chambermaid.

Gay. A chamber-jade!——Lord, Lord, how brave you keep your maidens here in London! Wuns-lent, she's as fine as our lady mayoress.

Muck. Ay, her mistress spoils her; but follow me, sir, and I'll warrant you, we'll manage her, and her mistress, too.

AIR.—*Set by the author.*

Gay. I am in truth,
A country youth,
Unused to London fashions:
Yet virtue guides,
And still presides,
O'er all my steps and passions:
No courtly leer,
But all sincere,
No bribe shall ever blind me;
If you can like
A Yorkshire tike,
An honest lad you'll find me.

Though Envy's tongue,
With slander hung,
Does oft bely our county;
No men on earth,
Boast greater worth,
Or more extend their bounty:
Our northern breeze,
With us agrees,
And does for business fit us;
In public cares,
In love's affairs,
With honour we acquit us.

A noble mind,
Is ne'er confined
To any shire, or nation;
He gains most praise,
Who best displays
A generous education.
While rancour rouls,
In narrow souls,
By narrow views discerning,
The truly wise
Will only prize
Good manners, sense, and learning.

[*All this time* GAYLOVE *does his utmost to discover himself to* ARBELLA, *but she turns from him, and won't understand him.*]

Gay. Well, an ye wunna see, I cannot help it. Good-bye to ye, forsooth; in the mean time, here's a paper with something in it that will clear your ladyship's eye-sight.

[*Throws down a letter, and exit smiling.*

Ar. What can the fool mean?

Comb. [*Taking up the letter.*] Madam, as I live, here's a letter from Mr Gaylove!

Ar. This is surprising. [*Snatches the letter, and reads.*] 'Though this disguise is put on to blind 'old Muckworm, I hope it will not conceal from 'my dear Arbella, the person of her ever constant

'GAYLOVE.'

Blind fool that I was! I could tear my eyes out!

Comb. Lord, madam! who the deuce could have thought it had been Mr Gaylove?

Ar. Hold your prattle! I have great hopes of this enterprize, however; it carries a good face with it; but, whether it succeeds or no, I must love the dear man, that ventures so hard for my sake.

AIR.—*Set by the author.*

That man, who best can danger dare,
Is most deserving of the fair;
The bold and brave we women prize;
The whining slave we all despise.

Let coxcombs flatter, cringe, and lie,
Pretend to languish, pine, and die;
Such men of words my scorn shall be;
The man of deeds is the man for me.

[*Exit.*

Comb. My mistress is entirely in the right on't.

AIR.—*I had a pretty lass, a tenant of my own.*

The man that ventures fairest,
And furthest for my sake,
With a fal, lal, la, &c.

The soonest of my purse,
And my person shall partake,
With a fal, lal, la, &c.

No drowsy drone shall ever
A conquest make of me,
But to a lad that's clever,
How civil could I be?
With a fal, lal, la, &c.

[*Exit* COMB.

SCENE V.

Enter SAPSKULL, *drest a-la-mode de petit maitre,* BLUNDER *in a rich livery, with his hair tucked up, and powdered behind.*

Blun. Mess, master, how fine ye be! marry, believe me, an ye were at Sapskull-hall, I dare say, sir Samuel himself would hardly know ye.

Sap. Know me! marry, I don't know myself —[*Surveying himself.*]—I'm so fine: And thou art quite another sort of a creature, too.—[*Turns* BLUNDER *about.*]—Well, talk what ye list of Yorkshire, I say there's nought like London; for my part, I dont care an I ne'er see the face of Sapskull-hall agen.

Blund. What need ye, an ye getten 6000l. with young gentlewoman? besides, vather has ty'd estate fast enough to ye.——An I were as ye, I'd e'en bide here, and live as lofty as the best o' 'em.

Enter a Servant, well dressed.

Ser. Gentlemen, I come from sir Penurious Muckworm. I am his servant, and wait on purpose to conduct you to Mrs Arbella's apartment.

Sap. Servant! Waunds, why, you're finer nor your master!

Ser. O, sir, that's nothing in London. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*An apartment.*

SLANGO *representing* ARBELLA, *Servant introducing* SAPSKULL *and* BLUNDER.

Sap. Well, forsooth, you know my business; few words are best among friends———Is it a match, or no? Say ay, and I'll second you.

Slango. A very compendious way of wooing, truly—[*Aside.*]—I hope you'll spare a maiden's blushes, sir; but, Lard Gad! you are too quick upon me!

Sap. I means to be quicker yet, ay marry, and make thee quick, too, before I ha' done with thee.

Slango. I protest, sir, you put me to such a nonplus, I don't know what to say.

Sap. Ne'er heed; parson shall teach thee what to say. For my part, I ha' con'd my lesson aforehand.

Slango. But will you love me?

Sap. Love thee! Lord, Lord, I loves thee better than I does my bay filly! did you ne'er see her, forsooth? Od, she's a dainty tit, and sure I am——I loves her better nor I do nown father. Blunder, run and fetch a parson.

Slango. Mr Blunder may save himself that trouble, sir; I have provided one already.

Sap. Why, then, let's make haste, dear sweet honey; for I long till it's over. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

Enter GAYLOVE *and* ARBELLA.

AIR.—*Set by the author.*

Gay. Thou only darling I admire,
My heart's delight, my soul's desire!
Possessing thee, I've greater store,
Than king to be of India's shore.

For every woman were there three,
And in the world no man but me,
I'd single you from all the rest,
To sweeten life, and make me blest!

Ar. Well, I never was so deceived in my life! How could you clown it so naturally?

Gay. What is it I would not do for your dear sake? But, I intreat you, let's lay hold of this opportunity, and put it out of fortune's power ever to divide us.

Ar. What would you have me do?

Gay. Leave all to me. I have left Combrush to amuse your uncle, while a fellow-collegiate of mine, who is in orders, waits in the next room to finish the rest.

Ar. Do what you will with me: For, in short, I don't know what to do with myself.

AIR.—*The nymph that undoes me.*

Arb. Let prudes and coquettes their intentions conceal;
With pride, and with pleasure, the truth I reveal;
You're all I can wish, and all I desire;
So fixed is my flame, it ne'er can expire.

Gay. Let rakes and libertines revel and range;
Possessed of such treasure, what mortal would change;
You're the source of my hopes, the spring of my joy,
A fountain of bliss that never can cloy.

AIR.—*By Mr Handel.*

GAYLOVE *and* ARBELLA *together.*

How transporting is the pleasure,
When two hearts like our's unite!
When our fondness knows no measure,
And no bounds our dear delight.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter MUCKWORM *and* COMBRUSH.

Muck. Well, I forgive you: This last action has made amends for all. I find a chamber-maid is prime minister in matrimonial affairs ——And you say, they are quite loving?

Comb. Fond, fond, sir, as two turtles! But I beg you would not disturb them.

Muck. By no means; let them have their love out, pretty fools! I shall be glad, however, to see some of their little fondnesses: But tell me seriously, how do you like the 'squire?

Comb. Oh! of all things, sir; and so does my mistress, I assure you.

Muck. How that scoundrel Gaylove will be disappointed.

Comb. He'll be ready to hang himself—about her neck. [*Aside.*

Muck. They'll make ballads upon him.

Comb. I have made one already, and will sing it if you please.

Muck. With all my heart.

AIR.—*A beggar got a beadle.*

There was a certain usurer,
He had a pretty niece,
Was courted by a barrister,
Who was her doating piece.
Her uncle, to prevent the same,
Did all that in him lay;
For which he's very much to blame,
As all good people say.

A country 'squire was to wed
This fair and dainty dame;
But such contraries in a bed,
Would be a monstrous shame:
To see a lady bright and gay,
Of fortune, and of charms,
So shamefully be thrown away,
Into a looby's arms.

The lovers, thus distracted,
It set them on a plot;
Which lately has been acted,
And——Shall I tell you what?
The gentleman disguised himself
Like to the country 'squire,
Deceived the old mischievous elf,
And got his heart's desire.

Muck. I don't like this song.

Comb. Then you don't like truth, sir.

Muck. What! d'ye mean to affront me?

Comb. Would you have me tell a lie, sir?

Muck. Get out of my house, you baggage!

Comb. I only stay to take my mistress with me; and see, here she comes.

Enter GAYLOVE *and* ARBELLA.

Muck. So, sir; you have deceived me: but I'll provide you a wedding-suit; a fine long Chancery suit, before ever you touch a penny of her fortune.

Gay. Sir, if you dare embezzle a farthing, I'll provide you with a more lasting garment; a curious stone doublet: You have met with your match, sir; I have studied the law, ay, and practised it too.

Muck. The devil take you and the law together!

Enter SAPSKULL, SLANGO, *and* BLUNDER.

Hey-day! Who in the name of wonder have we got here?

Gay. Only squire Sapskull, his bride, and boobily man.

Slang. Come, my dear! hold up your head like a man, and let them see what an elegant husband I have got.

Blun. Ay; and let them see what a dainty wife my master has gotten.

Sap. Here's a power of fine folk, sweet honey wife! pray, who may they be?

Slang. This, sir, is sir Penurious Muckworm.

Sap. No, honey! I fear you are mistaken. Sir Penurious is another guise sort of a man; an I mistake not, he's more liker yon same gentleman.

Blun. Ay, so he is, master.

Slang. That same gentleman was sir Penurious Muckworm some time ago, but now he's changed to George Gaylove, esquire.

Gay. At your service, sir.

Sap. And who's yon fine lady?

Gay. My wife, sir, and that worthy knight's niece.

Sap. Your wife, and that worthy knight's niece? why, who a murrain have I gotten, then?

Gay. My man, Slango; and I wish you much joy!

Sap. Your man Slango! what, have I married a man, then?

Slango. If you don't like me, my dear, we'll be divorced this minute.

Sap. My dear! a murrain take such dears! Where's my writings? I'll ha' you all hanged for cheats!

Gay. You had better hang yourself for a fool. Go home, child, go home, and learn more wit. There's your deed of a settlement; but, as for the writings, they happen to be mine, and kept fraudulently from me by your father, to whom they were mortgaged by my late brother. The estate has been clear these three years. Send your father to me, and I'll talk to him. This is tit for tat, young gentleman! Your father wanted to get my estate from me, and I have got the wife he intended for you. All's fair, sir.

Muck. I say all's foul, and a damned cheat! and so I'll make it appear. [*Exit in a rage.*

Gay. Do your worst, sir; you can't unmarry us.

AIR.—*Set by the author.*

Ar. Now fortune is past its severest,
My passion, of mortal's sincerest,
Kind Heaven has repaid in my dearest;
What gifts can it greater bestow?

Gay. True love shall, through destiny, guide us,
Still constant, whatever betide us,
There's nothing but death shall divide us,
So faithful a fondness we'll show.

Both. By Cupid and Hymen united,
By danger no longer affrighted,
We'll live in each other delighted,
The greatest of blessings below.

Sap. What mun I do? I mun ne'er see father's face again.

Gay. Never fear, squire; I'll set all to rights; though your father's my enemy, I'm not yours: My house shall be your home, till I have reconciled you to your father; and, for the honour of Yorkshire, I'll see you shan't be abused here.

Sap. Say ye so, sir? then I wish you much joy with all my heart!

Blun. Ay, and so does Blunder, too.

Sap. Well, sin I see you be so happy in a wife, I'll not be long without one, I assure you.

Gay. You can't be happier than I wish you.

AIR.—*Set by the author.*

CHORUS.

Gay. Come learn by this, ye bachelors,
Who lead unsettled lives,
When once ye come to serious thought,
There's nothing like good wives.

Ar. Come learn by this, ye maidens fair,
Say I advise you well,
You're better in a husband's arms,
Than leading apes in hell.

Sap. A batchelor's a cormorant,
A batchelor's a drone,
He eats and drinks at all men's cost,
But seldom at his own.

Comb. Old maids and fusty batchelors,
At marriage rail and lower,
So when the fox could'n't reach the grapes,
He cried, they all were sour.

Omnes. Old maids, &c.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

KING AND THE MILLER OF MANSFIELD.

BY

DODSLEY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
The King.	Peggy, *seduced by* Lord Lurewell.
The Miller.	Margery, *the Miller's wife.*
Richard, *the Miller's son; attached to* Peggy.	Kate, *the Miller's daughter.*
Lord Lurewell, *a courtier.*	
Courtiers and Keepers of the forest.	

Scene—Sherwood Forest.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Sherwood Forest.*

Enter several Courtiers, as lost.

1*st Cour.* 'Tis horrid dark! and this wood, I believe, has neither end nor side.

4*th Cour.* You mean to get out at, for we have found one in, you see.

2*d Cour.* I wish our good king Harry had kept nearer home to hunt; in my mind, the pretty tame deer in London make much better sport than the wild ones in Sherwood forest.

3*d Cour.* I can't tell which way his majesty went, nor whither any body is with him or not; but let us keep together, pray.

4*th Cour.* Ay, ay, like true courtiers, take care of ourselves, whatever becomes of our master.

2*d Cour.* Well, it's a terrible thing to be lost in the dark.

4*th Cour.* It is. And yet it's so common a case, that one would not think it should be at all so. Why we are all of us lost in the dark every day of our lives. Knaves keep us in the dark by their cunning, and fools by their ignorance. Divines lose us in dark mysteries; lawyers in dark cases; and statesmen in dark intrigues. Nay, the light of reason, which we so much boast of, what is it but a dark lanthorn, which just serves to prevent us from running our nose against a post, perhaps; but is no more able to lead us out of the dark mists of error and ignorance, in which we are lost, than an *ignis fatuus* would be to conduct us out of this wood.

1*st Cour.* But, my lord, this is no time for preaching, methinks. And, for all your morals, day-light would be much preferable to this darkness, I believe.

3*d Cour.* Indeed would it. But come, let us go on; we shall find some house or other by and by.

4*th Cour.* Come along. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the King.

King. No, no; this can be no public road, that's certain: I am lost, quite lost indeed. Of what advantage is it now to be a king? Night shews me no respect: I cannot see better, nor

walk so well as another man. What is a king? Is he not wiser than another man? Not without his counsellors, I plainly find. Is he not more powerful? I oft have been told so, indeed; but what now can my power command? Is he not, greater, and more magnificent? When seated on his throne, and surrounded with nobles and flatterers, perhaps he may think so; but when lost in a wood, alas! what is he but a common man? His wisdom knows not which is north, and which is south; his power a beggar's dog would bark at; and his greatness the beggar would not bow to. And yet, how oft are we puffed up with these false attributes? Well, in losing the monarch, I have found the man.

[*The report of a gun is heard.*

Hark! some villain sure is near! What were it best to do? Will my majesty protect me? No. Throw majesty aside, then, and let manhood do it.

Enter the MILLER.

Mil. I believe, I hear the rogue. Who's there?

King. No rogue, I assure you.

Mil. Little better, friend, I believe. Who fired that gun?

King. Not I, indeed.

Mil. You lie, I believe.

King. Lie! lie! how strange it seems to me, to be talked to in this style. [*Aside.*] Upon my word, I don't.

Mil. Come, come, sirrah, confess; you have shot one of the king's deer, have not you?

King. No, indeed; I owe the king more respect. I heard a gun go off, indeed, and was afraid some robbers might have been near.

Mil. I'm not bound to believe this, friend. Pray who are you? what's your name?

King. Name!

Mil. Name! yes, name. Why you have a name, have not you? Where do you come from? What is your business here?

King. These are questions I have not been used to, honest man.

Mil. May be so; but they are questions no honest man would be afraid to answer, I think. So, if you can give me no better account of yourself, I shall make bold to take you along with me, if you please.

King. With you! what authority have you to—

Mil. The king's authority, if I must give you an account, sir. I am John Cockle, the miller of Mansfield, one of his majesty's keepers in this forest of Sherwood; and I will let no suspected fellow pass this way, that cannot give a better account of himself than you have done, I promise you,

King. I must submit to my own authority. [*Aside.*] Very well, sir, I am glad to hear the king has so good an officer; and since I find you have his authority, I will give you a better account of myself, if you will do me the favour to hear it.

Mil. It's more than you deserve, I believe; but, let's hear what you can say for yourself.

King. I have the honour to belong to the king, as well as you; and, perhaps, should be as unwilling to see any wrong done him. I came down with him to hunt in this forest, and, the chase leading us to-day a great way from home, I am benighted in this wood, and have lost my way.

Mil. This does not sound well; if you have been a-hunting, pray, where is your horse?

King. I have tired my horse, so that he lay down under me, and I was obliged to leave him.

Mil. If I thought I might believe this now.—

King. I am not used to lie, honest man.

Mil. What! do you live at court, and not lie? that's a likely story, indeed!

King. Be that as it will, I speak truth now, I assure you; and, to convince you of it, if you will attend me to Nottingham, if I am near it, or give me a night's lodging in your own house, here is something to pay you for your trouble, and if that is not sufficient, I will satisfy you in the morning to your utmost desire.

Mil. Ay, now, I am convinced, you are a courtier; here is a little bribe for to-day, and a large promise for to-morrow, both in a breath: here, take it again, and take this along with it.—— John Cockle is no courtier; he can do what he ought without a bribe.

King. Thou art a very extraordinary man, I must own, and I should be glad, methinks, to be farther acquainted with thee.

Mil. Thee! and thou! prithee don't thee and thou me: I believe I am as good a man as yourself at least.

King. Sir, I beg your pardon.

Mil. Nay, I am not angry, friend; only, I don't love to be too familiar with any body, before I know whether they deserve it or not.

King. You are in the right. But what am I to do?

Mil. You may do what you please. You are twelve miles from Nottingham, and all the way through this thick wood; but, if you are resolved upon going thither to-night, I will put you in the road, and direct you, the best I can; or, if you will accept of such poor entertainment as a miller can give, you shall be welcome to stay all night, and, in the morning, I will go with you myself.

King. And cannot you go with me to-night?

Mil. I would not go with you to-night, if you were the king.

King. Then I must go with you, I think.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to the town of Mansfield.*

DICK *alone.*

Well, dear Mansfield, I am glad to see thy face again. But my heart aches, methinks, for fear this should be only a trick of theirs, to get me into their power. Yet, the letter seems to be wrote with an air of sincerity, I confess; and the girl was never used to lie, till she kept a lord's company. Let me see, I'll read it once more.

'Dear Richard—I am at last (though much too 'late for me) convinced of the injury done to us 'both, by that base man, who made me think 'you false. He contrived these letters, which I 'send you, to make me think you just upon the 'point of being married to another, a thought I 'could not bear with patience; so, aiming at re-'venge on you, consented to my own undoing. 'But, for your own sake, I beg you to return 'hither, for I have some hopes of being able to 'do you justice, which is the only comfort of 'your most distressed, but ever affectionate,

'PEGGY.'

There can be no cheat in this, sure! The letters she has sent, are, I think, a proof of her sincerity. Well, I will go to her, however: I cannot think she will again betray me. If she has as much tenderness left for me, as, in spite of her ill usage, I still feel for her, I'm sure she won't. Let me see! I am not far from the house, I believe. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Changes to a room.*

Enter PEGGY *and* PHŒBE.

Phabe. Pray, madam, make yourself easy.

Peg. Ah, Phœbe! she that has lost her virtue, has, with it, lost her ease, and all her happiness. Believing, cheated fool! to think him false.

Phabe. Be patient, madam; I hope, you will shortly be revenged on that deceitful lord.

Peg. I hope I shall, for that were just revenge! But, will revenge make me happy? Will it excuse my falsehood? Will it restore me to the heart of my much injured love? Ah, no! That blooming innocence he used to praise, and call the greatest beauty of our sex, is gone! I have no charm left, that might renew that flame, I took such pains to quench.

[*Knocking at the door.*

See who's there. O heavens! 'tis he! Alas! that ever I should be ashamed to see the man I love!

Enter RICHARD, *who stands looking on her at a distance, she weeping.*

Dick. Well, Peggy (but I suppose you're madam now, in that fine dress), you see, you have brought me back; is it to triumph in your falsehood? or, am I to receive the slighted leavings of your fine lord?

Peg. O Richard! after the injury I have done you, I cannot look on you without confusion: But do not think so hardly of me: I stayed not to be slighted by him; for, the moment I discovered his vile plot on you, I fled his sight; nor could he ever prevail to see me since.

Dick. Ah, Peggy! you were too hasty in believing; and much I fear, the vengeance aimed at me, had other charms to recommend it to you; such bravery as that [*Pointing to her clothes.*] I had not to bestow; but, if a tender, honest heart could please, you had it all; and, if I wished for more, 'twas for your sake.

Peg. O Richard! when you consider the wicked stratagem he contrived, to make me think you base and deceitful, I hope you will, at least, pity my folly, and, in some measure, excuse my falsehood; that you will forgive me, I dare not hope.

Dick. To be forced to fly from my friends and country, for a crime that I was innocent of, is an injury that I cannot easily forgive, to be sure: But, if you are less guilty of it than I thought, I shall be very glad; and, if your design be really, as you say, to clear me, and to expose the baseness of him that betrayed and ruined you, I will join with you, with all my heart. But how do you propose to do this?

Peg. The king is now in this forest a-hunting, and our young lord is every day with him: Now, I think, if we could take some opportunity of throwing ourselves at his majesty's feet, and complaining of the injustice of one of his courtiers, it might, perhaps, have some effect upon him.

Dick. If we were suffered to make him sensible of it, perhaps it might; but the complaints of such little folks as we, seldom reach the ears of majesty.

Peg. We can but try.

Dick. Well, if you will go with me to my father's, and stay there, till such an opportunity happens, I shall believe you in earnest, and will join with you in your design.

Peg. I will do any thing to convince you of my sincerity, and to make satisfaction for the injuries which have been done you.

Dick. Will you go now?

Peg. I'll be with you in less than an hour.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Changes to the mill.*

MARGERY *and* KATE *knitting.*

Kate. O dear! I would not see a spirit for all the world! but I love dearly to hear stories of them. Well, and what then?

Mar. And so at last, in a dismal hollow tone, it cried———

[*A knocking at the door frights them both; they scream out, and throw down their knitting.*

Mar. and Kate. Lord bless us! What's that?

Kate. O dear mother! it's some judgment upus, I am afraid! They say, talk of the devil, and he'll appear.

Mar. Kate, go and see who's at the door.

Kate. I durst not go, mother! do you go.

Mar. Come, let's both go!

Kate. Now, don't speak as if you was afraid!

Mar. No, I won't, if I can help it. Who's there?

Dick. [*without*] What! won't you let me in?

Kate. O gemini! it's like our Dick, I think: He's certainly dead! and it's his spirit.

Mar. Heav'n forbid! I think in my heart, it's he himself. Open the door, Kate.

Kate. Nay! do you.

Mar. Come, we'll both open it.

[*They open the door.*

Enter DICK.

Dick. Dear mother! how do you do? I thought you would not have let me in!

Mar. Dear child! I'm overjoyed to see thee; but I was so frighted, I did not know what to do.

Kate. Dear brother, I am glad to see you! how have you done this long while?

Dick. Very well, Kate. But where's my father?

Mar. He heard a gun go off, just now, and he's gone to see who 'tis.

Dick. What, they love venison at Mansfield as well as ever, I suppose?

Kate. Ay; and they will have it, too.

Mil. [*Without.*]—Hoa! Madge! Kate! bring a light here!

Mar. Yonder he is.

Kate. Has he catched the rogue, I wonder?

Enter the KING *and the* MILLER.

Mar. Who have you got?

Mil. I have brought thee a stranger, Madge; thou must give him a supper, and a lodging, if thou can'st.

Mar. You have got a better stranger of your own, I can tell you: Dick's come.

Mil. Dick! Where is he? Why, Dick! How is't, my lad?

Dick. Very well, I thank you, father.

King. A little more, and you had pushed me down.

Mil. Faith, sir, you must excuse me; I was overjoyed to see my boy. He has been at London, and I have not seen him these four years.

King. Well, I shall once in my life have the happiness of being treated as a common man; and of seeing human nature without disguise.

[*Aside.*

Mil. What has brought thee home so unexpected?

Dick. You will know that presently.

Mil. Of that, by-and-by, then. We have got the king down in the forest a hunting, this season; and this honest gentleman, who came down with his majesty from London, has been with them to-day, it seems, and has lost his way.—Come, Madge, see what thou can'st get for supper. Kill a couple of the best fowls: and go you, Kate, and draw a pitcher of ale. We are famous, sir, at Mansfield, for good ale; and for honest fellows, that know how to drink it.

King. Good ale will be acceptable at present, for I am very dry. But, pray, how came your son to leave you, and go to London?

Mil. Why, that's a story which Dick, perhaps, won't like to have told.

King. Then I don't desire to hear it.

Enter KATE, *with an earthen pitcher of ale, and a horn.*

Mil. So; now, do you go help your mother.—Sir, my hearty service to you.

King. Thank ye, sir. This plain sincerity and freedom, is a happiness unknown to kings.

[*Aside.*

Mil. Come, sir.

King. Richard, my service to you.

Dick. Thank you, sir.

Mil. Well, Dick, and how dost thou like London? Come, tell us what thou hast seen.

Dick. Seen! I have seen the land of promise.

Mil. The land of promise! What dost thou mean?

Dick. The court, father.

Mil. Thou wilt never leave joking.

Dick. To be serious, then, I have seen the disappointment of my hopes and expectations; and that's more than one would wish to see.

Mil. What! Would the great man, thou wast recommended to, do nothing at all for thee at last?

Dick. Why, yes; he would promise me to the last.

Mil. Zoons! Do the courtiers think their dependents can eat promises?

Dick. No, no; they never trouble their heads to think whether we eat at all or not. I have now dangled after his lordship several years, tantalized with hopes and expectations; this year promised one place, the next another, and the third, in sure and certain hope of——a disappointment. One falls, and it was promised before; another, and I am just half an hour too late; a third, and it stops the mouth of a creditor; a fourth, and it pays the hire of a flatterer;

a fifth, and it bribes a vote: and, the sixth, I am promised still. But having thus slept away some years, I awoke from my dream: my lord, I found, was so far from having it in his power to get a place for me, that he had been all this while seeking after one for himself.

Mil. Poor Dick! And is plain honesty, then, a recommendation to no place at court?

Dick. It may recommend you to be a footman, perhaps, but nothing further; nothing further, indeed. If you look higher, you must furnish yourself with other qualifications: you must learn to say ay, or no; to run, or stand; to fetch, or carry, or leap over a stick, at the word of command. You must be master of the arts of flattery, insinuation, dissimulation, application, and—[*Pointing to his palm.*]—right application, too, if you hope to succeed.

King. You don't consider I am a courtier, methinks.

Dick. Not I, indeed; 'tis no concern of mine what you are. If, in general, my character of the court is true, 'tis not my fault if it's disagreeable to your worship. There are particular exceptions, I own, and I hope you may be one

King. Nay, I don't want to be flattered; so let that pass. Here's better success to you the next time you come to London!

Dick. I thank ye; but I don't design to see it again in haste.

Mil. No, no, Dick; instead of depending upon lords' promises, depend upon the labour of thine own hands; expect nothing but what thou can'st earn, and then thou wilt not be disappointed. But come, I want a description of London; thou hast told us nothing thou hast seen yet.

Dick. O! 'Tis a fine place! I have seen large houses with small hospitality; great men do little actions; and fine ladies do nothing at all. I have seen the honest lawyers of Westminster-hall, and the virtuous inhabitants of Change-Alley; the politic madmen of coffee-houses, and the wise statesmen of Bedlam. I have seen merry tragedies, and sad comedies; devotion at an opera, and mirth at a sermon; I have seen fine clothes at St James's, and long bills at Ludgate-hill. I have seen poor grandeur, and rich poverty; high honours, and low flattery; great pride, and no merit. In short, I have seen a fool with a title, a knave with a pension, and an honest man with a thread-bare coat. Pray, how do you like London?

Mil. And is this the best description thou can'st give of it?

Dick. Yes.

King. Why, Richard, you are a satirist, I find.

Dick. I love to speak truth, sir; if that happens to be satire, I can't help it.

Mil. Well! If this is London, give me my country cottage; which, though it is not a great house, nor a fine house, is my own house; and I can shew a receipt for the building on't. But come, sir, our supper, I believe, is ready for us by this time; and to such as I have, you're welcome as a prince.

King. I thank you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Changes to the wood.*

Enter several keepers.

1st Keep. THE report of a gun was somewhere this way, I'm sure.

2d Keep. Yes; but I can never believe that any body would come a deer-stealing so dark a night as this.

3d Keep. Where did the deer harbour to-day?

4th Keep. There was a herd lay upon Hamilton-hill; another, just by Robin Hood's chair; and a third here, in Mansfield wood.

1st Keep. Ay; those they have been amongst!

2d Keep. But we shall never be able to find them to-night, 'tis so dark.

3d Keep. No, no; let's go back again.

1st Keep. Zoons! You're afraid of a broken head, I suppose, if we should find them; and so had rather slink back again. Hark! stand close; I hear them coming this way.

Enter the Courtiers.

1st Cour. Did not you hear somebody just now? Faith, I begin to be afraid we shall meet with some misfortune to-night.

2d Cour. Why, if any body should take what we have got, we have made a fine business of it.

3d Cour. Let them take it, if they will; I am so tired, I shall make but small resistance.

[*The keepers rush upon them.*

2d Keep. Ay; rogues, rascals, and villains! You have got it, have you?

2d Cour. Indeed we've got but very little: but what we have, you're welcome to, if you will but use us civilly.

1st Keep. O yes! very civilly; you deserve to be used civilly, to be sure.

4th Cour. Why, what have we done that we may not be civilly used?

1st Keep. Come, come, don't trifle; surrender!

1st Cour. I have but three half-crowns about me.

2d Cour. Here's three and sixpence for you, gentlemen.

3d Cour. Here's my watch; I have no money at all.

4th Cour. Indeed I have nothing in my pocket but a snuff-box.

4th Keep. What! The dogs want to bribe us, do they? No, rascals; you shall go before the justice to-morrow, depend on't.

4th Cour. Before the justice! what, for being robbed?

1st Keep. For being robbed! What do you mean? Who has robbed you?

4th Cour. Why, did not you just now demand our money, gentlemen?

2d Keep. O, the rascals! They will swear a robbery against us, I warrant!

4th Cour. A robbery! Ay; to be sure.

1st Keep. No, no; we did not demand your money; we demanded the deer you have killed.

4th Cour. The devil take the deer, I say! he led us a chase of six hours, and got away from us at last.

1st Keep. Zoons! Ye dogs, do ye think to banter us? I tell ye, you have this night shot one of the king's deer; did not we hear the gun go off? Did not we hear you say, you was afraid it should be taken from you?

2d Cour. We were afraid our money should be taken from us.

1st Keep. Come, come, no more shuffling: I tell ye, you're all rogues, and we'll have you hanged you may depend on't. Come, let's take them to old Cockle's; we're not far off: we'll keep them there all night, and to-morrow morning we'll away with them before the justice.

4th Cour. A very pretty adventure!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to the mill.*

KING, MILLER, MARGERY, *and* DICK, *at supper.*

Mil. Come, sir, you must mend a bad supper with a glass of good ale; here's king Harry's health!

King. With all my heart. Come, Richard, here's king Harry's health; I hope you are courtier enough to pledge me, are not you?

Dick. Yes, yes, sir; I'll drink the king's health with all my heart.

Mar. Come, sir, my humble service to you, and much good may do ye with your poor supper: I wish it had been better.

King. You need make no apologies.

Mar. We are obliged to your goodness in excusing our rudeness.

Mil. Prithee, Margery, don't trouble the gentleman with compliments.

Mar. Lord, husband, if one had no more manners than you, the gentleman would take us all for hogs.

Mil. Now, I think, the more compliments the less manners.

King. I think so too. Compliments in discourse, I believe, are like ceremonies in religion; the one has destroyed all true piety, and the other all sincerity and plain-dealing.

Mil. Then a fig for all ceremony, and compliments, too: give us thy hand; and let us drink and be merry.

King. Right, honest miller; let us drink and be merry. Come, have you got e'er a good song?

Mil. Ah! my singing days are over; but my man Joe has got an excellent one; and if you have a mind to hear it, I'll call him in.

King. With all my heart.

Mil. Joe!

Enter JOE.

Mil. Come, Joe! drink, boy; I have promised this gentleman that you shall sing him your last new song.

Joe. Well, master, if you have promised it him, he shall have it.

SONG.

How happy a state does the miller possess!
Who would be no greater, nor fears to be less;
On his mill and himself he depends for support,
Which is better than servilely cringing at court.

What though he all dusty and whitened does go,
The more he's be-powdered, the more like a beau;
A clown, in this dress, may be honester far
Than a courtier, who struts in his garter and star.

Though his hands are so daubed, they're not fit to be seen,
The hands of his betters are not very clean;
A palm more polite may as dirtily deal;
Gold, in handling, will stick to the fingers like meal.

What if, when a pudding for dinner he lacks,
He cribs, without scruple, from other men's sacks;
In this of right noble examples he brags,
Who borrow as freely from other men's bags.

Or should he endeavour to heap an estate,
In this he would mimic the tools of the state;
Whose aim is alone their own coffers to fill,
As all his concern's to bring grist to his mill.

He eats when he's hungry, he drinks when he's dry,
And down when he's weary contented does lie;
Then rises up chearful to work and to sing:
If so happy a miller, then who'd be a king?

Mil. There's a song for you!

King. He should go sing this at court, I think.

Dick. I believe, if he's wise, he will chuse to stay at home though.

Enter PEGGY.

Mil. What wind blew you hither, pray? You have a good share of impudence, or you would be ashamed to set your foot within my house, methinks.

Peg. Ashamed I am, indeed; but do not call me impudent. [*Weeps.*

Dick. Dear father, suspend your anger for the present; that she is here now, is by my direction, and to do me justice.

Peg. To do that, is all that is now in my power; for, as to myself, I am ruined past redemption; my character, my virtue, my peace, are gone: I am abandoned by my friends, despised by the world, and exposed to misery and want.

King. Pray, let me know the story of your misfortunes: perhaps it may be in my power to do something towards redressing them.

Peg. That you may learn from him, whom I have wronged; but as for me, shame will not let me speak, or hear it told.

[*Exit* PEGGY.

King. She's very pretty.

Dick. O, sir, I once thought her an angel; I loved her dearer than my life, and did believe her passion was the same for me: but a young nobleman of this neighbourhood happening to see her, her youth and blooming beauty presently struck his fancy; a thousand artifices were immediately employed to debauch and ruin her. But all his arts were vain; not even the promise of making her his wife, could prevail upon her: In a little time he found out her love to me, and, imagining this to be the cause of her refusal, he, by forged letters, and feigned stories, contrived to make her believe I was upon the point of marriage with another woman. Possessed with this opinion, she, in a rage, writes me word, never to see her more; and, in revenge, consented to her own undoing. Not contented with this, nor easy while I was so near her, he bribed one of his cast-off mistresses to swear a child to me, which she did; this was the occasion of my leaving my friends, and flying to London.

King. And how does she propose to do you justice?

Dick. Why, the king being now in this forest a hunting, we design to take some opportunity of throwing ourselves at his Majesty's feet, and complaining of the injustice done us by this noble villain.

Mil. Ah, Dick! I expect but little redress from such an application. Things of this nature are so common among the great, that I am afraid it will only be made a jest of.

King. Those, that can make a jest of what ought to be shocking to humanity, surely deserve not the name of great or noble men.

Dick. What do you think of it, sir? If you belong to the court, you, perhaps, may know something of the king's temper.

King. Why, if I can judge of his temper at all, I think he would not suffer the greatest nobleman in his court to do an injustice to the meanest subject in his kingdom. But, pray, who is the nobleman that is capable of such actions as these?

Dick. Do you know my lord Lurewell?

King. Yes.

Dick. That's the man.

King. Well, I would have you put your design in execution. 'Tis my opinion the king would not only hear your complaint, but redress your injuries.

Mil. I wish it may prove so.

Enter the Keepers, leading in the courtiers.

1*st Keep.* Hola! Cockle! Where are ye?—Why, man, we have nabbed a pack of rogues here, just in the fact.

King. Ha, ha, ha! What, turned highwaymen, my lords, or deer-stealers?

1*st Cour.* I am very glad to find your majesty in health and safety.

2*d Cour.* We have run through a great many perils and dangers to-night: but the joy of finding your majesty so unexpectedly, will make us forget all we have suffered.

Mil. } What! is this the king!
Dick. }

King. I am very glad to see you, my lords, I confess; and particularly you, my lord Lurewell.

Lure. Your majesty does me honour.

King. Yes, my lord, and I will do you justice, too; your honour has been highly wronged by this young man.

Lure. Wronged, my liege!

King. I hope so, my lord; for I would fain believe you can't be guilty of baseness and treachery.

Lure. I hope your majesty will never find me so. What dares this villain say?

Dick. I am not to be frighted, my lord. I dare speak truth at any time.

Lure. Whatever stains my honour, must be false.

King. I know it must, my lord; yet has this man, not knowing who I was, presumed to charge your lordship, not only with great injustice to himself, but also with ruining an innocent virgin, whom he loved, and who was to have been his wife; which, if true, were base and treacherous; but I know 'tis false, and, therefore, leave it to your lordship to say what punishment I shall inflict upon him, for the injury done to your honour.

Lure. I thank your majesty. I will not be severe; he shall only ask my pardon, and to-morrow morning be obliged to marry the creature he has traduced me with.

King. This is mild. Well, you hear your sentence

Dick. May I not have leave to speak before your majesty?

King. What can'st thou say?

Dick. If I had your majesty's permission, I believe I have certain witnesses which will undeniably prove the truth of all I have accused his lordship of.

King. Produce them.

Dick. Peggy!

Enter PEGGY.

King. Do you know this woman, my lord?

Lure. I know her, please your majesty, by sight; she's a tenant's daughter.

Peg. [*Aside.*] Majesty!——What, is this the king?

Dick. Yes.

King. Have you no particular acquaintance with her?

Lure. Hum! I have not seen her these several months.

Dick. True, my lord; and that is part of your accusation; for, I believe, I have some letters which will prove your lordship once had a more particular acquaintance with her. Here is one of the first his lordship wrote to her, full of the tenderest and most solemn protestations of love and constancy; here is another, which will inform your majesty of the pains he took to ruin her.—There is an absolute promise of marriage before he could accomplish it.

King. What say you, my lord? are these your hands?

Lure. I believe, please your majesty, I might have a little affair of gallantry with the girl some time ago.

King. It *was* a little affair, my lord; a mean affair; and what you call gallantry, I call infamy. Do you think, my lord, that greatness gives a sanction to wickedness? Or that it is the prerogative of lords to be unjust and inhuman? You remember the sentence which yourself pronounced upon this innocent man; you cannot think it hard that it should pass on you who are guilty.

Lure. I hope your majesty will consider my rank, and not oblige me to marry her.

King. Your rank, my lord! Greatness, that stoops to actions base and low, deserts its rank, and pulls its honours down. What makes your lordship great? Is it your gilded equipage and dress? Then put it on your meanest slave, and he's as great as you. Is it your riches or estate? The villain that should plunder you of all, would then be as great as you. No, my lord; he, that acts greatly, is the true great man. I therefore think, you ought, in justice, to marry her you thus have wronged.

Peg. Let my tears thank your majesty. But, alas! I am afraid to marry this young lord: that would only give him power to use me worse, and still encrease my misery; I, therefore, beg your majesty will not command him to do it.

King. Rise, then, and hear me. My lord, you see how low the greatest nobleman may be reduced by ungenerous actions. Here is, under your own hand, an absolute promise of marriage to this young woman, which, from a thorough knowledge of your unworthiness, she has prudently declined to make you fulfil. I shall, therefore, not insist upon it: but I command you, upon pain of my displeasure, immediately to settle on her three hundred pounds a-year.

Peg. May Heaven reward your majesty's goodness. 'Tis too much for me; but if your majesty thinks fit, let it be settled upon this much injured man, to make some satisfaction for the wrongs which have been done him. As to myself, I only sought to clear the innocence of him I loved and wronged, then hide me from the world, and die forgiven.

Dick. This act of generous virtue cancels all past failings; come to my arms, and be as dear as ever.

Peg. You cannot, sure, forgive me!

Dick. I can, I do, and still will make you mine.

Peg. O, why did I ever wrong such generous love?

Dick. Talk no more of it. Here, let us kneel, and thank the goodness which has made us blest.

King. May you be happy!

Mil. [*Kneels.*] After I have seen so much of your majesty's goodness, I cannot despair of pardon, even for the rough usage your majesty received from me.

[*The king draws his sword, the Miller is frighted, and rises up, thinking he was going to kill him.*

What have I done, that I should lose my life?

King. Kneel without fear. No, my good host, so far are you from having any thing to pardon, that I am much your debtor. I cannot think but so good and honest a man will make a worthy and honourable knight; so, rise up, sir John Cockle: And to support your state, and in some sort requite the pleasure you have done us, a thousand marks a year shall be your revenue.

Mil. Your majesty's bounty I receive with thankfulness; I have been guilty of no meanness to obtain it, and hope I shall not be obliged to keep it upon base conditions; for though I am willing to be a faithful subject, I am resolved to be a free, and an honest man.

King. I rely upon your being so: And, to gain the friendship of such a one, I shall al-

ways think an addition to my happiness, though a king.

Worth, in whatever state, is sure a prize,
Which kings, of all men, ought not to despise;
By selfish sycophants so close besieged,
'Tis by mere chance a worthy man's obliged:
But hence, to every courtier be it known,
Virtue shall find protection from the throne.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

SIR JOHN COCKLE AT COURT.

BY

DODSLEY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

THE KING.
SIR JOHN COCKLE.
SIR TIMOTHY FLASH.
GREENWOOD, *attached to* MISS KITTY.
BUCKRAM, *a Tailor,*
Barber.
French Cook.
Vintner.
JOE, *servant to* SIR JOHN COCKLE.
Three Courtiers.

WOMEN.

MISS KITTY, *engaged to* GREENWOOD.
MRS STARCH, *a milliner.*

Scene— London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter SIR JOHN, *Tailor, Barber, and* JOE.

Tay. 'Tis the fashion, sir, I assure you.

Sir John. Fashions are for fools; don't tell me of fashion. Must a man make an ass of himself, because it's the fashion?

Tay. But you would be like other folks, sir, would not you?

Sir John. No, sir, if this is their likeness, I would not be like other folks. Why, a man might as well be cased up in armour; here's buckram and whalebone enough, to turn a bullet.

Joe. Sir, here's the barber has brought you home a new periwig.

Sir John. Let him come in. Come, friend! let's see if you're as good at fashions as Mr Buckram here. What the devil's this?

Bar. The bag, sir.

Sir John. The bag, sir! an what's this bag for, sir? this is not the fashion too, I hope?

Bar. It's what is very much wore, sir, indeed.

Sir John. Wore, sir! how is it wore? where is it wore? what is it for?

Bar. Sir, it is only for ornament.

Sir John. O, 'tis an ornament! I beg your pardon! Now, positively, I should not have taken this for an ornament. My poor grey hairs are, in my opinion, much more becoming. But, come, put it on! There, now, what do you think I am like?

Joe. I cod measter, you're not like the same mon, I'm sure.

Bar. Sir, 'tis very genteel, I assure you,

Sir John. Genteel! ay, that it may be, for aught I know, but I'm sure 'tis very ugly.

Bar. They wear nothing else in France, sir.

Sir John. In France, sir! what's France to me? I'm an Englishman, sir, and know no right the fools of France have to be my examples. Here, take it again; I'll have none of your new-fangled French fopperies; and if you please, I'll make you a present of this fine, fashionable coat again. Fashion, indeed!

[*Exeunt Tailor, Barber, and Joe.*

Re-enter JOE *with the French Cook.*

Joe. Sir, here's a fine gentleman wants to speak with you.

Cook. Sir, me have hear dat your honour want one cook.

Sir John. Sir, you are very obliging; I suppose you would recommend one to me. But, as I don't know you— ——

Cook. No, no, sir! me am one cook myself, and would be proud of de honour to serve you.

Sir John. You a cook! and pray, what wages may you expect, to afford such finery as that?

Cook. Me will have one hundred guinea a year, no more; and two or three servant under me to do de work.

Sir John. Hum! very reasonable truly! And, pray, what extraordinary matters can you do, to deserve such wages?

Cook. O! me can make you one hundred dish, de Englis know noting of; me can make you de portable soup to put in your pocket: me can dress you de foul a-la marli, en galentine, a-la montmorancy; de duck en grimadin; de chicken a la chombre; de turkey en botine; de pidgeon en mirliton a l' Italienne, a-la d' Huxelles: en fine, me can give you de essence of five or six ham, and de juice of ten or twelve stone of beef, all in de sauce of one little dish.

Sir John. Very fine! At this rate, no wonder the poor are starved, and the butcher unpaid. No, I will have no such cooks, I promise you; it is the luxury and extravagance introduced by such French kickshaw-mongers as you, that has devoured and destroyed old English hospitality! Go! go about your business; I have no mind to be beggared, nor to beggar honest tradesmen. Joe! [*Exit Cook.*

Joe. Sir.

Sir John. Let my daughter know, the king has sent for me, and I am gone to court, to wait on his majesty.

Joe. Yes, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter the King, and several Courtiers.

King. Well, my lords, our old friend, the miller of Mansfield is arrived at last.

1*st Cour.* He has been in town two or three days; has not your majesty seen him yet?

King. No, but I have sent for him to attend me this evening: and I design, with only you, my lords, who are now present, to entertain myself a while with his honest freedom. He will be here presently.

2*d Cour.* He must certainly divert your majesty.

3*d Cour.* He may be diverting, perhaps; but if I may speak my mind freely, I think there is something too plain and rough in his behaviour, for your majesty to bear.

King. Your lordship, perhaps, may be afraid of plain truth and sincerity, but I am not.

3*d Cour.* I beg your majesty's pardon; I did not suppose you was; I only think, there is a certain awe and reverence due to your majesty, which I am afraid his want of politeness may make him transgress.

King. My lord, whilst I love my subjects, and preserve to them all their rights and liberties, I doubt not of meeting with a proper respect from the roughest of them; but as for the awe and reverence which your politeness would flatter me with, I love it not. I will, that all my subjects treat me with sincerity. An honest freedom of speech, as it is every honest man's right, so none can be afraid of it, but he that is conscious to himself of ill-deservings. Sound maxims, and right conduct, can never be ridiculed; and, where the contrary prevail, the severest censure is greatest kindness.

3*d Cour.* I believe your majesty is in the right, and I stand corrected.

Enter a GENTLEMAN.

Gen. May it please your majesty, here is a person who calls himself sir John Cockle, the miller of Mansfield, begs admittance to your majesty.

King. Conduct him in.

Enter SIR JOHN.

King. Honest sir John Cockle, you are welcome to London.

Sir John. I thank your majesty for the honour you do me, and am glad to find your majesty in good health.

King. But pray, sir John, why in the habit of a miller yet? What I gave you was with a design to set you above the mean dependence of a trade for subsistence.

Sir John. Your majesty will pardon my freedom. Whilst my trade will support me, I am independent; and I look upon that to be more honourable in an Englishman, than any dependance whatsoever. I am a plain, blunt man, and may, possibly, some time or other, offend your majesty; and where, then, is my subsistence?

King. And dare you not trust the honour of a king?

Sir John. Without doubt I might trust your majesty very safely; but, in general, though the honour of kings ought to be more sacred, the humour of kings is like that of other men; and, when they please to change their mind, who shall dare to call their honour in question?

King. Sir John, you are in the right; and I am glad to see you maintain that noble freedom of spirit: I wish all my subjects were as independent on me as you resolve to be; I should then hear more truth and less flattery. But come, what news? How does my lady and your son Richard?

Sir John. I thank your majesty; Margery is very well, and so is Dick.

King. I hope you have brought her up to town with you?

Sir John. She has displeased me, of late, very much.

King. In what?

Sir John. You shall hear. When I was only plain John Cockle, the miller of Mansfield, a farmer's son, in the neighbourhood, made love to my daughter. He was a worthy, honest man. He loved my daughter sincerely; and, to all appearance, her affections were placed on him. I approved of the match, and gave him my consent. But when your majesty's bounty had raised my fortune and condition, my daughter, Kate, became Miss Kitty: She grew a fine girl, and was presently taken notice of by the young gentlemen of the country. Amongst the rest, sir Timothy Flash, a young, rakish, extravagant knight, made his addresses to her; his title, his dress, his equipage, dazzled her eyes and her understanding; and fond, I suppose, of being made a lady, she despises and forsakes her first lover, the honest farmer, and is determined to marry this mad, wrong-headed knight.

King. And is this the occasion of your displeasure? I should think you had rather cause to rejoice that she was so prudent. What! do you think it no advantage to your daughter, nor honour to yourself, to be allied to so great a man?

Sir John. It may be an honour to be allied to a great man, when a great man is a man of honour; but that is not always the case. Besides, nothing that is unjust, can be either prudent or honourable: And the breaking her faith and promise with a man that loved, and every way deserved her, merely for the sake of a little vanity, or self-interest, is an action that I am ashamed my daughter could be guilty of.

King. Why, you are the most extraordinary man I ever knew: I have heard of fathers quarrelling with their children for marrying foolishly for love; but you are so singular as to blame your's for marrying wisely for interest.

Sir John. Why, I may differ a little from the common practice of my neighbours——But, I hope your majesty does not, therefore, think me to blame?

King. No: Singularity in the right is never a crime. If you are satisfied your actions are just, let the world blush that they are singular.

Sir John. Nay, and I am, perhaps, not so regardless of interest as your majesty may apprehend. It is very possible a knight, or even a lord, may be poor as well as a farmer. No offence, I hope? [*Turning to the courtiers.*

Cour. No, no, no. Impertinent fellow! [*Aside.*

King. Well, sir John, I shall be glad to hear more of this affair another time; but tell me how you like London? Your son Richard, I remember, gave a very satirical description of it; I hope you are better entertained.

Sir John. So well, that I assure your majesty, I am in admiration and wonder all day long.

King. Ay! well, let us hear what it is you admire and wonder at.

Sir John. Almost every thing I see or hear of. When I see the splendour and magnificence in which some noblemen appear, I admire their riches; but when I hear of their debts, and their mortgages, I wonder at their folly. When I hear of a dinner costing an hundred pounds, I am surprised that one man should have so many friends to entertain; but when I am told, that it was made only for five or six squeamish lords, or piddling ladies, that eat not perhaps an ounce a-piece, I am quite astonished. When I hear of an estate of twenty or thirty thousand a year, I envy the man that has it in his power to do so much good, and wonder how he disposes of it; but when I am told of the necessary expences of a gentleman in horses and whores, and eating and drinking, and dressing and gaming, I am surprised that the poor man is able to live. In short, when I consider our publick credit, our honour, our courage, our freedom, our publick spirit, I am surprised, amazed, astonished, and confounded.

1*st Cour.* Is not this bold, sir?

Sir John. Perhaps it may; but I suppose his majesty would not have an Englishman a coward?

King. Far from it. Let the generous spirit of freedom reign unchecked: To speak his mind, is the undoubted right of every Briton; and be it the glory of my reign, that all my subjects enjoy that honest liberty. 'Tis my wish to redress all grievances; to right all wrongs: But kings, alas! are but fallible men; errors in government will happen, as well as failings in private life, and ought to be candidly imputed. And let me ask you one question, sir John. Do you really think you could honestly withstand all the temptations that wealth and power would lay before you?

Sir John. I will not boast before your majesty; perhaps I could not. Yet give me leave to say, the man, whom wealth or power can make a villain, is sure unworthy of possessing either.

King. Suppose self-interest, too, should clash with publick duty?

Sir John. Suppose it should: 'Tis always a man's duty to be just; and doubly his with whom the public trust their rights and liberties.

King. I think so; nay, he, who cannot scorn the narrow interest of his own poor self, to serve his country, and defend her rights, deserves not the protection of a country to defend his own; at least, should not be trusted with the rights of other men.

Sir John. I wish no such were ever trusted.

King. I wish so, too: But how are kings to know the hearts of men?

Sir John. 'Tis difficult indeed; yet something might be done.

King. What?

Sir John. The man whom a king employs, or a nation trusts, should be thoroughly tried. Examine his private character: Mark how he lives: Is he luxurious, or proud, or ambitious, or extravagant? avoid him: The soul of that man is mean; necessity will press him, and public fraud must pay his private debts. But if you find a man with a clear head, sound judgemnt, and a right honest heart—that is the man to serve both you and his country.

King. You're right; and such by me shall ever be distinguished. 'Tis both my duty and my interest to promote them. To such, if I give wealth, it will enrich the public; to such, if I give power, the nation will be mighty; to such, if I give honour, I shall raise my own. But surely, sir John, your's is not the language, nor the sentiments of a common miller; how, n a cottage, could you gain this superior wisio m?

Sir John. Wisdom is not confined to palaces; nor always to be bought with gold. I read often, and think sometimes; and he who does that, may gain some knowledge, even in a cottage. As for any thing superior, I pretend not to it. What I have said, I hope, is plain good sense; at least 'tis honest, and well meant.

King. Sir John, I think so; and, to convince you how much I esteem your plain-dealing and sincerity of heart, receive this ring as a mark of my favour.

Sir John. I thank your majesty.

King. Don't thank me now; at present I have business that must be dispatched, and will desire you to leave me; before 'tis long I'll see you again.

Sir John. I wish your majesty a good night. [*Exit.*

King. Well, my lords, what do you think of this miller?

1*st Cour.* He talks well: what he is in the bottom, I don't know.

2*d Cour.* I'm afraid not sound.

3*d Cour.* I fancy he's set on by somebody to impose upon your majesty with this fair shew of honesty.

1*st Cour.* Or is not he some cunning knave that wants to work himself into your majesty's favour?

King. I have a fancy come into my head to try him; which I'll communicate to you, and put in execution immediately. An hour hence, my lords, I shall expect to see you at sir John's. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A tavern.*

SIR TIMOTHY FLASH, *the* LANDLORD, *and* GREENWOOD.

Sir Tim. Honest Bacchus, how dost thou do?

Land. Sir, I am very glad to see you; pray, when did you come to town?

Sir Tim. Yesterday; and on an affair that I shall want a little of your assistance in.

Land. Any thing in my power, you know, you may command.

Sir Tim. You must know then, I have an intrigue with a young lady, that's just come to town with her father, and want an agreeable house to meet her at; can you recommend one to me?

Land. I can recommend you, sir, to the most convenient woman in all London. What think you of Mrs Wheedle?

Sir Tim. The best woman in all the world: I know her very well; how could I be so stupid not to think of her? Greenwood, do you know where our country neighbour, sir John Cockle, lodges?

Green. Yes, sir.

Sir Tim. Don't be out of the way then; I shall send a letter by you presently, which you must deliver privately into Miss Kitty's own hand. If she comes with you, I shall give you directions where to conduct her, and do you come back here and let me know.

Green. Yes, sir. Poor Kitty! is it thus thy falsehood to me is to be punished? I will prevent thy ruin, however. [*Exit.*

SIR TIMOTHY *sings.*

O the pleasing, pleasing joys,
Which in women we possess!
O the raptures which arise!
They alone have power to bless!

Beauty smiling,
Wit beguiling,
Kindness charming,
Fancy warming,
Kissing, toying,
Melting, dying.
O the raptures which arise!
O the pleasing, pleasing joys!

Land. You are a merry wag.

Sir Tim. Merry, ay! why what is life without enjoying the pleasures of it? Come, I'll write this letter, and then, honest Bacchus, we'll taste what wine thou hast got. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

MISS KITTY *and* MRS STARCH.

Kitty. But pray, Mrs Starch, does all new fashions come up first at court?

Mrs Starch. O, dear madam, yes. They do nothing else there but study new fashions. That's what the court is for: And we milliners, and tailors, and barbers, and mantua-makers, go there to learn fashions for the good of the public.

Kitty. But, madam; was not you saying just now, that it was the fashion for the ladies to paint themselves?

Mrs Starch. Yes.

Kitty. Well, that is pure; then one may be as handsome as ever one will, you know. And if it was not for a few freckles, I believe I should be very well; should not I, Mrs Starch?

Mrs Starch. Indeed, madam, you are very handsome.

Kitty. Nay, don't flatter me now; do you really think I am handsome?

Mrs Starch. Upon my word, you are. What a shape is there! What a genteel air! What a sparkling eye!

Kitty. Indeed, I doubt you flatter me. Not but I have an eye, and can make use of it too, as well as the best of them, if I please.

SONG.

Though born in a country town,
The beauties of London unknown,
My heart is as tender,
My waist is as slender,
My skin is as white,
My eyes are as bright
As the best of them all,
That twinkle or sparkle at court or ball.
I can ogle and sigh,
Then frown and be coy;
False sorrow
Now borrow,
And rise in a rage;
Then languish
In anguish,
And softly, and softly engage.

But pray, Mrs Starch, which do you think the most genteel walk now? To trip it away o' this manner, or to swim smoothly along thus?

Mrs Starch. They both become you extremely.

Kitty. Do they really? I'm glad you think so, for, indeed, I believe you are a very good judge. And, now I think on't, I'll have your opinion in something else. What do you think it is that makes a fine lady?

Mrs Starch. Why, madam, a fine person, fine wit, fine airs, and fine clothes.

Kitty. Well, you have told me already that I'm very handsome, you know, so that's one thing; but, as for wit, what's that? I don't know what that is, Mrs Starch.

Mrs Starch. O madam, wit is, as one may say ——the——the being very witty; that is—— comical as it were; doing something to make every body laugh.

Kitty. O, is that all? nay, then, I can be as witty as any body, for I am very comical. Well, but what's the next? fine airs: O, let me alone for fine airs; I have airs enough, if I can but get lovers to practise them upon. And then, fine clothes; why, these are very fine clothes, I think; don't you think so, Mrs Starch?

Mrs Starch. Yes, madam.

Enter SIR JOHN, *observing them.*

Kitty. And is not this a very pretty cap, too? Does not it become me?

Mrs Starch. Yes, madam.

Kitty. But don't you think this hoop a little too big?

Sir John. No, no; too big! no. Not above six or seven yards round.

Mrs Starch. Indeed, sir, 'tis within the circumference of the mode a great deal.

Sir John. That it may be, but I'm sure it's beyond the circumference of modesty a great deal.

Kitty. Lord, papa, can't you dress yourself as you've a mind, and let us alone? How should you know any thing of womens' fashions? Come, let us go into the next room.

[*Exeunt* MISS KITTY *and* MRS STARCH.

Enter JOE *with* GREENWOOD.

Joe. Sir, here's one that you'll be very glad to see.

Sir John. Who is it?—What, honest Greenwood! May I believe my eyes?

Green. Sir, I am very glad to see you; I hope all your family are well.

Sir John. Very well. But, for Heaven's sake, what has brought thee to London? What's the meaning of this livery? I don't understand thee.

Green. I don't wonder that you are surprised; but I will explain myself. You know the faithful, honest love I bear your daughter; and you are sensible, since the addresses of sir Timothy

Flash, how much her falsehood has grieved me; yet more for her sake, even than my own: my own unhappiness I could endure with patience, but the thoughts of seeing her reduced to shame and misery, I cannot bear.

Sir John. What dost thou mean?

Green. I very much suspect his designs upon her are not honourable.

Sir John. Not honourable! he dare not wrong me so!——But, go on.

Green. Immediately after you had left the country, hearing that he was hastening to London after you, and wanted a servant, I went and offered myself, resolving, by a strict watch on all his actions, to prevent, if possible, the ruin of her I cannot but love, how ill soever I have been treated. Not knowing me to be his rival, he brought me along with him. We arrived in London yesterday, and I am now sent by him to give your daughter privately this letter.

Sir John. What can it tend to? I know not what to think; but if I find he dares to mean me wrong, by this good hand——

Green. Then let me tell ye, he means you villainous wrong. The ruin of your daughter is contrived; I heard the plot; and this very letter is to put it in execution.

Sir John. What shall I do?

Green. Leave all to me. I'll deliver the letter, and, by her behaviour, we shall know better how to take our measures. But how shall I see her?

Sir John. She is in the next room; I'll go in and send her to you.

Green. If you tell her who it is, perhaps she will not be seen.

Sir John. I won't. [*Exit.*

Enter MISS KITTY.

Kitty. Bless me! is not that sir Timothy's livery! [*Aside.*]—Pray, sir, is sir Timothy Flash come to town?

Green. Yes, madam.

Kitty. Good lack! is it you? What new whim have you got in your head now, pray?

Green. No new whim in my head, but an old one in my heart, which, I am afraid, will not be easily removed.

Kitty. Indeed, young man, I am sorry for it; but you have had my answer already, and I wonder you should trouble me again.

Green. And is it thus you receive me! Is this the reward of all my faithful love?

Kitty. Can I help your being in love? I'm sure I don't desire it; I wish you would not teaze me with your impertinent love any more.

Green. Why, then, did you encourage it? Forgive me leave to say, you once did love me.

Kitty. Perhaps I might, when I thought myself but your equal; but now, I think, you cannot, in modesty, pretend to me any longer.

Green. Vain, foolish girl! for Heaven's sake, what alteration do you find in yourself for the better? In what, I wonder, does the fine lady differ from the miller's daughter? Have you more wit, more sense, or more virtue, than you had before? Or are you in any thing altered from your former self, except in pride, folly, and affectation?

Kitty. Sir, let me tell you, these are liberties that don't become you at all. Miller's daughter!

Green. Come, come, Kitty; for shame! lay aside these foolish airs of the fine lady; return to yourself, and let me ask you one serious question: Do you really think sir Timothy designs to marry you?

Kitty. You are very impertinent to ask me such a question; but, to silence your presumption for ever—I'm sure he designs it.

Green. I'm glad she thinks so, however. [*Aside.*]. Nay, then, I do not expect you will resign the flattering prospect of wealth and grandeur, to live in a cottage on a little farm. 'Tis true, I shall be independent of all the world; my farm, however small, will be my own, unmortgaged.

Kitty. Psha! can you buy me fine clothes? Can you keep me a coach? Can you make me a lady? If not, I advise you to go down again to your pitiful farm, and marry somebody suitable to your rank.

SONG.

Adieu to your cart and your plough;
I scorn to milk your cow.
Your turkeys and geese,
Your butter and cheese,
Are much below me now.
If ever I wed,
I'll hold up my head,
And be a fine lady, I vow.

And so, sir, your very humble servant.

Green. Nay, madam, you shall not leave me yet; I have something more to say before we part. Suppose this worthy, honourable knight, instead of marriage, should only have a base design upon your virtue?

Kitty. He scorns it: No, he loves me, and I know will marry me.

Green. Dear Kitty, be not deceived; I know he will not.

Kitty. You know nothing of the matter.

Green. Read that, and be convinced.

[*She reads.*

'My dear angel,

'I could no longer stay in the country, when 'you was not there to make it agreeable. I came 'to town yesterday; and beg, if possible, you will, 'this evening, make me happy with your com-'pany. I will meet you at a relation's; my ser-

'vant will conduct you to the house. I am im-
'patient till I throw myself into your arms, and
'convince you how much I am,

'Your fond and passionate admirer,

'TIMOTHY FLASH.'

Kitty. Well, and what is there in this to convince me of his ill intentions?

Green. Enough, I think. If his designs are honourable, why are they not open? Why does he not come to your father's house, and make his proposals? Why are you to be met in the dark, at a stranger's?

Kitty. Let me see—'I'll meet you at a rela-
'tion's; my servant will conduct you;' indeed I don't know what to think of that.

Green. I'll tell you, madam; that pretended relation is a notorious bawd.

Kitty. 'Tis false; you have contrived this story to abuse me.

Green. No, Kitty, so well I love you, that, if I thought his designs were just, I could rejoice in your happiness, though at the expence of my own.

Kitty. You strangely surprise me! I wish I knew the truth.

Green. To convince you of my truth, here is a direction to the house in his own hand, which he himself gave me, lest I should mistake: Whither, if you still doubt my sincerity, and think proper to go, I am ready to be your conductor.

Kitty. And is this the end of all his designs? have I been courted only to my ruin? my eyes are now too clearly opened. What have I been doing?

Green. If you are but so convinced of your danger, as to avoid it, I am satisfied.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Sir John. What do I hear? Are you reconciled, then?

Kitty. My dear father! I have been cheated and abused.

Sir John. I hope your virtue is untouched?

Kitty. That I will always preserve.

Sir John. Then I forgive you any thing. But how shall we be revenged on this scoundrel knight?

Kitty. Contrive but that, and I am easy.

Green. As his base designs have not been executed, I think, if we could expose and laugh at him, it would be sufficient punishment.

Sir John. If it could be done severely.

Kitty. I think it may. I believe I have found out a way to be revenged on him; come with me into the next room, and we'll put it in execution.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Sir, a gentleman desires to speak with you.

Sir John. I'll come to him. Go you together, d'ye hear, and contrive your design.

[*They go out severally.*

SCENE III.

Enter SIR JOHN *and the* KING, *disguised as a collegiate.*

Sir John. No compliments, I tell ye, but come to the point: What is your business?

King. As I appear to you in the habit of a collegiate, you may fancy I am some queer pedantic fellow; but I assure you, I am a person of some birth, and had a liberal education. I have seen the world, and kept the best company. But living a little too freely, and having spent the greatest part of my fortune on women and wine, I was persuaded, by a certain nobleman, to take orders, and he would give me a living, which he said was coming into his hands. I was just closing with the proposal, when the spiteful incumbent recovered, and I was disappointed.

Sir John. Well, and what's all this to me?

King. Why, sir, there is a living now fallen, which is in the king's gift, and I hear you have so good an interest with his majesty, that I am persuaded a word from you, in my favour, would be of great service to me.

Sir John. And what must that word be, pray?

King. Nay, that I leave to you.

Sir John. You are in the right; and I'll tell you what it shall be. That you, being a senseless, idle-headed fellow, and having ruined yourself by your own folly and extravagance, you therefore think yourself highly qualified to teach mankind their duty. Will that do?

King. You are in jest, sir.

Sir John. Upon my word, but I am in earnest. I think he that recommends a profligate wretch to the most serious function in life, merely for the sake of a joke, gives as bad a proof of his morals, as he does of his wit.

King. Sir, I honour your plain-dealing. You exactly answer the character I have heard of your uncommon sincerity; and, to let you see that I am capable of something, I have wrote a poem in praise of that virtue, which I beg leave to present to you, and hope you will receive it kindly. [*Gives him the poem.*

Sir John. Sir, I am not used to these things: I don't understand them at all; but let's see—[SIR JOHN *reads.*]—'A poem in praise of the incomparable sincerity and uncommon honesty of the worthy sir John Cockle,' &c.—Enough, enough!—a poem in praise of sincerity, with a fulsome compliment in the very title, is extraordinary indeed! Sir, I am obliged to you for your kind intentions; your wit and your poetry may be very fine, for aught I know; but a little more common sense, I believe, could do you no harm.

King. He is not to be flattered, I find; but I'll try what bribery will do. That, I'm afraid,

hits every body's taste. [*Aside.*]—Shall I beg one word more with you? Sir, you are a gentleman of the greatest sincerity and honour I ever met with, and, for that reason, I shall always have the highest regard for you in the world, and for all that belongs to you. I hear your daughter is going to be married; let me beg leave to present her with this diamond buckle.

Sir John. Sir, you surprise me very much; pray, what may the value of this be?

King. That's not worth mentioning—about five hundred pounds, I believe.

Sir John. Why, did not you tell me, just now, that you had spent all your fortune?

King. I did so: but it was for a particular reason; and you shall find I am not so poor as I represented myself.

Sir John. I am glad of it. But, pray, how am I to return this extraordinary generosity?

King. I expect no return, sir, upon my honour; though you have it in your power to oblige me very much.

Sir John. Don't mention the living, for that I have told you already you are not fit for.

King. I won't. But there is a certain place at court of another kind, which I have long had a mind to: 'Tis true, there is a sorry, insignificant fellow in possession of it at present; but he's of no service; and I know your power with the king; a word or two from you would soon dispossess him.

Sir John. But what must he be dispossessed for?

King. To make room for me, that's all.

Sir John. Hum——Indeed it won't do with me—here, take it again; and let me tell you, I am not to be flattered into a foolish thing, nor bribed into a base one.

King. [*discovering himself.*] Then thou art my friend, and I will keep thee next my heart.

Sir John. And is it your majesty?

King. Be not surprised; it is your own maxim, that a king cannot be too cautious in trying those whom he designs to trust. Forgive this disguise—I have tried thy honesty, and will no longer suspect it.

Enter GREENWOOD.

Green. Sir, I am come to let Miss Kitty know privately, that my master will be here, disguised, immediately.

Sir John. Will he? Well, go into the next room, and tell her so. If your majesty will be so good as to retire into this chamber a while, you will hear something, perhaps, that will divert you.

Enter JOE.

Joe. Sir, here's a maid-servant come to be hired.

Sir John. Let her come in. I'll speak to her presently. [*Exit with the king.*

Enter SIR TIMOTHY, *disguised as a maid-servant.*

Sir Tim. Well, I am obliged to the dear sir for this kind contrivance of getting me into the house with her. 'Twill be charmingly convenient——

Re-enter SIR JOHN.

Sir Tim. Sir, I heard that the young lady, your daughter, wanted a servant, and I should be proud of the honour to serve her.

Sir John. My daughter will be here presently. Pray, my dear, what's your name?

Sir Tim. Faith, I never thought of that; what shall I say? [*Aside.*]—Betty, sir.

Sir John. And pray, Mrs Betty, who did you live with last?

Sir Tim. Pox of his impertinence! he has non-plussed me again.—[*Aside.*] Sir, I—I—lived with sir Timothy Flash.

Sir John. Ah, a vile fellow that! a very vile fellow, was not he? Did he pay you your wages?

Sir Tim. Yes, sir—I shall be even with you for this by and by. [*Aside.*

Sir John. You was well off, then; for they say its what he very seldom does. Sad pay!—I can tell you, one part of your business must be to watch that villain, that he does not debauch my daughter: for I hear he designs it. But I hope we shall prevent him.

Sir Tim. I'll take care of her, sir, to be sure—I burst with laughter to think how charmingly we shall gull the old fellow! [*Aside.*

Sir John. Kate!

Enter MISS KITTY.

Here's a maid for you, Kate, if you like her.

Kitty. O Lord! a maid! why she's a monster! I never saw so ugly a thing in all my life.

Sir Tim. The cunning jade does this to blind the old fool. [*Aside.*

Kitty. Pray, child, what can you do?

Sir Tim. I'll do the best I can to please you, madam, and I don't question but I shall do.

Kitty. Indeed you won't do.

Sir Tim. I hope I shall, madam, if you please to try me.

Kitty. No, I durst not try you, indeed.

Sir Tim. Why, madam?

Kitty. Methinks you look like a fool; I hate a fool.

Sir John. Nay, my dear, don't abuse the young woman; upon my word, I think she looks mighty well. Hold up your head, child. O Lord! Mrs Betty, you have got a beard, methinks.

[*Strokes her under the chin.*

Kitty. What! has Betty got a beard? Ha, ha, ha! Ah, Betty! why did not you shave closer? But I told ye you was a fool!

Sir John. Well—and what wages do you expect, my dear?

Kitty. Ay, what work do you design to do, my dear?

Sir John. How cleverly you have bit the old fool, ha!

Kitty. And how charmingly we shall laugh at him by and by, ha!

Sir John. Now don't you think you look like a puppy?

Kitty. Poor sir Timothy! are you disappointed, love? Come, don't nangry, and I'll sing it a song.

SONG.

Ah, luckless knight! I mourn thy case:
Alas! what hast thou done?
Poor Betty! thou hast lost thy place;
Poor knight! thy sex is gone!

Learn, henceforth, from this disaster,
When for girls you lay your plots,
That each miss expects a master
In breeches, not in petticoats.

Sir John and Kitty. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Tim. Zoons! am I to be used in this manner? And do you think I will bear it unrevenged?

Kitty. And have you the impudence to think you are not well used?

Sir John. Nay, nay, if he's not satisfied, instead of the entertainment he expected, suppose we give him what he deserves. Who's within, there?

Enter three or four Servants, SIR TIMOTHY *runs off, and they after him.*

Sir John. They'll overtake him; and I don't doubt but they'll give him the discipline he deserves.

Enter KING, GREENWOOD, *and Courtiers.*

King. After what you have told me, I think they cannot use him too ill. Madam, I wish you joy of your escape from the ruin which threatened you.

Kitty. The king! I thank your majesty.

King. And I am glad to hear that you are reconciled to an honest man that deserves you.

Kitty. I see my error; and I hope, by my future conduct, to make amends for the uneasiness I have given to so good a father.

Sir John. My dear child, I am fully satisfied: and I hope thou wilt every day be more and more convinced, that the happiness of a wife does not consist in a title, or fine appearance of her husband, but in the worthiness of his sentiments, and the fondness of his heart.

King. And now, my good old man, henceforth be thou my friend. I will give thee an apartment in my palace, that thou mayest always be near my person. And let me conjure thee ever to preserve this honest, plain sincerity. Speak to me freely, and let me hear the voice of truth. If my people complain, convey their grievances faithfully to my ear; for how should kings redress those ills, which flatterers hide, or wicked men disguise?

Sir John. I thank your majesty for the confidence you have in me: my heart, I know, is honest, and my affection to your majesty sincere—but as to my abilities, alas! they are but small; yet, such as they are, if it clash not with my duty to the public, they shall always be at your majesty's service.

King. I'd have you just to both.

But let your country's good be first your aim;
On this our honest miller builds his claim,
At least for pardon; if you please, for fame.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

LYING VALET.

BY

GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

the lying Valet.
s, his master, attached to MELISSA.
GUTTLE.
rvant to SIR W. GAYLESS.
RIPPET.

WOMEN.

MELISSA, *a rich heiress.*
MRS GAD-ABOUT, } *Visitors of* GAYLESS.
MRS TRIPPET, }
KITTY PRY, *maid to* MELISSA.

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—GAYLESS's *lodgings.*

Enter GAYLESS *and* SHARP.

. How, sir, shall you be married to-mor-
? I'm afraid you joke with your poor
servant.

I tell thee, Sharp, last night Melissa con-
and fixed to-morrow for the happy day.

. 'Tis well she did, sir, or it might have
dreadful one for us in our present con-
all your money spent; your moveables
our honour almost ruined, and your hum-
ant almost starved; we could not possi-
e stood it two days longer—But if this
ady will marry you, and relieve us, o' my
nce I'll turn friend to the sex, rail no
it matrimony, but curse the whores, and
f a wife myself.

. And yet, Sharp, when I think how I have
d upon her, I am almost resolved to throw
at her feet, tell her the real situation of
irs, ask her pardon, and implore her pity.

Sharp. After marriage, with all my heart, sir; but don't let your conscience and honour so far get the better of your poverty and good sense, as to rely on so great uncertainty as a fine lady's mercy and good-nature.

Gay. I know her generous temper, and am almost persuaded to rely upon it. What! because I am poor, shall I abandon my honour?

Sharp. Yes, you must, sir, or abandon me. So, pray, discharge one of us; for eat I must, and speedily too: and you know very well, that that honour of yours will neither introduce you to a great man's table, nor get me credit for a single beef-steak.

Gay. What can I do?

Sharp. Nothing, while honour sticks in your throat. Do, gulp, master, and down with it.

Gay. Prithee leave me to my thoughts.

Sharp. Leave you! No, not in such bad company, I'll assure you. Why, you must certainly be a very great philosopher, sir, to moralize and declaim so charmingly as you do, about honou

and conscience, when your doors are beset with bailiffs, and not one single guinea in your pocket to bribe the villains.

Gay. Don't be witty, and give your advice, sirrah.

Sharp. Do you be wise, and take it, sir. But, to be serious, you certainly have spent your fortune, and out-lived your credit, as your pockets and my belly can testify. Your father has disowned you; all your friends forsook you, except myself, who am starving with you. Now, sir, if you marry this young lady, who, as yet, thank Heaven, knows nothing of your misfortunes, and by that means procure a better fortune than that you have squandered away, make a good husband, and turn economist, you still may be happy, may still be sir William's heir, and the lady too no loser by the bargain. There's reason and argument, sir.

Gay. 'Twas with that prospect I first made love to her; and, though my fortune has been ill spent, I have at least purchased discretion with it.

Sharp. Pray, then, convince me of that, sir, and make no more objections to the marriage.—You see I am reduced to my waistcoat already; and when necessity has undressed me from top to toe, she must begin with you, and then we shall be forced to keep house and die by inches. Look you, sir, if you won't resolve to take my advice, while you have one coat to your back, I must e'en take to my heels while I have strength to run, and something to cover me. So, sir, wishing you much comfort and consolation with your bare conscience, I am your most obedient and half-starved friend and servant.

[*Going.*

Gay. Hold, Sharp! You won't leave me?

Sharp. I must eat, sir; by my honour and appetite, I must.

Gay. Well, then, I am resolved to favour the cheat; and as I shall quite change my former course of life, happy may be the consequences: at least of this I am sure——

Sharp. That you can't be worse than you are at present.

Gay. [*A knocking without.*]—Who's there?

Sharp. Some of your former good friends, who favoured you with money at fifty per cent. and helped you to spend it, and are now become daily memento's to you of the folly of trusting rogues, following whores, and laughing at my advice.

Gay. Cease your impertinence! To the door! If they are duns, tell them my marriage is now certainly fixed; and persuade them still to forbear a few days longer, and keep my circumstances a secret, for their sakes as well as my own.

Sharp. O never fear it, sir: they still have so much friendship for you, as not to desire your ruin to their own disadvantage.

Gay. And, do you hear, Sharp, if it should be any body from Melissa, say I am not at home; lest the bad appearance we make here, should make them suspect something to our disadvantage.

Sharp. I'll obey you, sir; but I am afraid they will easily discover the consumptive situation of our affairs, by my chop-fallen countenance.

[*Exit* SHARP.

Gay. These very rascals, who are now continually dunning and persecuting me, were the very persons who led me to my ruin, partook of my prosperity, and professed the greatest friendship.

Sharp. [*Without.*]—Upon my word, Mrs Kitty, my master's not at home.

Kitty. [*Without.*]—Look'e, Sharp, I must and will see him.

Gay. Ha! What do I hear? Melissa's maid! What has brought her here? My poverty has made her my enemy, too—She is certainly come with no good intent—No friendship there without fees—She's coming up stairs—What must I do? I'll get into this closet and listen.

[*Exit* GAYLESS.

Enter SHARP *and* KITTY.

Kitty. I must know where he is; and will know, too, Mr Impertinence.

Sharp. Not of me ye won't.—[*Aside.*]—He's not within, I tell you, Mrs Kitty; I don't know myself. Do you think I can conjure?

Kitty. But I know you will lie abominably; therefore, don't trifle with me. I come from my mistress, Melissa: you know, I suppose, what's to be done to-morrow morning?

Sharp. Ay; and to-morrow night too, girl.

Kitty. Not if I can help it.—[*Aside.*]—But come, where is your master? For see him I must.

Sharp. Pray, Mrs Kitty, what's your opinion of this match between my master and your mistress?

Kitty. Why, I have no opinion of it at all; and yet most of our wants will be relieved by it, too: for instance, now, your master will get a good fortune; that's what I'm afraid he wants: my mistress will get a husband; that's what she has wanted for some time; you will have the pleasure of my conversation, and I an opportunity of breaking your head for your impertinence.

Sharp. Madam, I'm your most humble servant. But I'll tell you what, Mrs Kitty, I am positively against the match: for was I a man of my master's fortune——

Kitty. You'd marry if you could, and mend it—Ha, ha, ha! Pray, Sharp, where does your master's estate lie?

Gay. Oh, the devil, what a question was there!

[*Aside.*

Sharp. Lie! Lie! Why, it lies—faith, I can't name any particular place; it lies in so many.—His effects are divided, some here, some there; his steward hardly knows himself.

Kitty. Scattered, scattered, I suppose. But, hark'e, Sharp, what's become of your furniture? You seem to be a little bare here at present.

Gay. What, has she found out that, too? [*Aside.*

Sharp. Why, you must know, as soon as the wedding was fixed, my master ordered me to remove his goods into a friend's house, to make room for a ball which he designs to give here the day after the marriage.

Kitty. The luckiest thing in the world! For my mistress designs to have a ball and entertainment here, to-night, before the marriage; and that's my business with your master.

Sharp. The devil it is! [*Aside.*

Kitty. She'll not have it public; she designs to invite only eight or ten couple of friends.

Sharp. No more?

Kitty. No more: and she ordered me to desire your master not to make a great entertainment.

Sharp. Oh, never fear——

Kitty. Ten or a dozen little nice things, with some fruit, I believe, will be enough in all conscience.

Sharp. Oh, curse your conscience! [*Aside.*

Kitty. And what do you think I have done of my own head?

Sharp. What!

Kitty. I have invited all my lord Stately's servants to come and see you, and have a dance in the kitchen: Won't your master be surprised?

Sharp. Much so indeed!

Kitty. Well, be quick and find out your master, and make what haste you can with your preparations: you have no time to lose. Prithee, Sharp, what's the matter with you? I have not seen you for some time, and you seem to look a little thin.

Sharp. Oh my unfortunate face!—[*Aside.*]—I'm in pure good health, thank you, Mrs Kitty; and I'll assure you I've a very good stomach; never better in all my life; and I am as full of vigour, hussy——

[*Offers to kiss her.*

Kitty. What, with that face! Well, bye, bye.—[*Going.*]—Oh, Sharp, what ill-looking fellows are those, were standing about your door when I came in? They want your master too, I suppose?

Sharp. Hum! Yes; they are waiting for him. They are some of his tenants out of the country, that want to pay him some money.

Kitty. Tenants! What, do you let his tenants stand in the street?

Sharp. They choose it: as they seldom come to town, they are willing to see as much of it as they can, when they do; they are raw, ignorant, honest people.

Kitty. Well, I must run home: farewell—but do you hear, get something substantial for us in the kitchen—a ham, a turkey, or what you will—we'll be very merry; and be sure to remove the tables and chairs away there too, that we may have room to dance: I can't bear to be confined in my French dances; tal, lal, lal—[*Dancing.*]—Well, adieu! Without any compliment, I shall die if I don't see you soon.

[*Exit* KITTY.

Sharp. And, without any compliment, I pray Heaven you may!

Enter GAYLESS.

[*They look for some time sorrowful at each other.*

Gay. Oh, Sharp!

Sharp. Oh, master!

Gay. We are certainly undone!

Sharp. That's no news to me.

Gay. Eight or ten couple of dancers—ten or a dozen little nice dishes, with some fruit—my lord Stately's servants—ham and turkey!

Sharp. Say no more! the very sound creates an appetite; and I am sure of late I have had no occasion for whetters and provocatives.

Gay. Cursed misfortune! What can we do?

Sharp. Hang ourselves. I see no other remedy, except you have a receipt to give a ball and a supper, without meat or music.

Gay. Melissa has certainly heard of my bad circumstances, and has invented this scheme to distress me, and break off the match.

Sharp. I don't believe it, sir; begging your pardon.

Gay. No? Why did her maid, then, make so strict an inquiry into my fortune and affairs?

Sharp. For two very substantial reasons: the first, to satisfy a curiosity natural to her as a woman; the second, to have the pleasure of my conversation, very natural to her as a woman of taste and understanding.

Gay. Prithee, be more serious: is not our all at stake?

Sharp. Yes, sir; and yet that all of ours is of so little consequence, that a man, with a very small share of philosophy, may part from it without much pain or uneasiness. However, sir, I'll convince you, in half an hour, that Mrs Melissa knows nothing of your circumstances; and I'll tell you what too, sir, she shan't be here to-night, and yet you shall marry her to-morrow morning.

Gay. How, how, dear Sharp?

Sharp. 'Tis here, here, sir! Warm, warm; and delays will cool it: therefore, I'll away to her, and do you be as merry as love and poverty will permit you.

Would you succeed, a faithful friend depute,
Whose head can plan, and front can execute.

I am the man! and I hope you neither dispute my friendship nor qualifications?

Gay. Indeed I don't. Prithee, be gone.

Sharp. I fly! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—MELISSA's *lodgings.*

Enter MELISSA *and* KITTY.

Mel. You surprise me, Kitty! The master not at home—the man in confusion—no furniture in the house——and ill-looking fellows about the doors! 'Tis all a riddle.

Kitty. But very easy to be explained.

Mel. Prithee, explain it, then; nor keep me longer in suspence.

Kitty. The affair is this, madam: Mr Gayless is over head and ears in debt; you are over head and ears in love; you'll marry him to-morrow; the next day your whole fortune goes to his creditors, and you and your children are to live comfortably upon the remainder.

Mel. I cannot think him base.

Kitty. But I know they are all base. You are very young, and very ignorant of the sex; I am young, too, but have had more experience: You never was in love before; I have been in love with an hundred, and tried them all; and know them to be a parcel of barbarous, perjured, deluding, bewitching devils.

Mel. The low wretches you have had to do with, may answer the character you give them; but Mr Gayless——

Kitty. Is a man, madam.

Mel. I hope so, Kitty, or I would have nothing to do with him.

Kitty. With all my heart——I have given you my sentiments upon the occasion, and shall leave you to your own inclinations.

Mel. Oh, madam, I am much obliged to you for your great condescension—ha, ha, ha! However, I have so great a regard for your opinion, that had I certain proofs of his villany——

Kitty. Of his poverty, you may have a hundred: I am sure, I have had none to the contrary.

Mel. Oh, there the shoe pinches! [*Aside.*

Kitty. Nay, so far from giving me the usual perquisites of my place, he has not so much as kept me in temper, with little endearing civilities; and one might reasonably expect, when a man is deficient in one way, that he should make it up in another. [*Knocking without.*

Mel. See who is at the door. [*Exit* KITTY.] I must be cautious how I hearken too much to this girl. Her bad opinion of Mr Gayless seems to arise from his disregard of her.

Enter SHARP *and* KITTY.

—So, Sharp, have you found your master?——Will things be ready for the ball and entertainment?

Sharp. To your wishes, madam. I have just now bespoke the music and supper, and wait now for your ladyship's farther commands.

Mel. My compliments to your master, and let him know, I and my company will be with him by six; we design to drink tea and play at cards, before we dance.

Kitty. So shall I and my company, Mr Sharp. [*Aside.*

Sharp. Mighty well, madam!

Mel. Prithee, Sharp, what makes you come without your coat? 'Tis too cool to go so airy, sure.

Kitty. Mr Sharp, madam, is of a very hot constitution——ha, ha, ha!

Sharp. If it had been ever so cool, I have had enough to warm me since I came from home, I am sure; but no matter for that. [*Sighing.*

Mel. What d'ye mean?

Sharp. Pray, don't ask me, madam; I beseech you, don't: let us change the subject.

Kitty. Insist upon knowing it, madam! My curiosity must be satisfied, or I shall burst. [*Aside.*

Mel. I do insist upon knowing———On pain of my displeasure, tell me——

Sharp. If my master should know—I must not tell you, madam, indeed.

Mel. I promise you, upon my honour, he never shall.

Sharp. But can your ladyship insure secrecy from that quarter?

Kitty. Yes, Mr Jackanapes, for any thing you can say.

Mel. I engage for her.

Sharp. Why then, in short, madam—I cannot tell you.

Mel. Don't trifle with me.

Sharp. Then, since you will have it, madam—I lost my coat in defence of your reputation.

Mel. In defence of my reputation!

Sharp. I will assure you, madam, I've suffered very much in defence of it; which is more than I would have done for my own.

Mel. Prithee, explain!

Sharp. In short, madam, you was seen about a month ago to make a visit to my master alone.

Mel. Alone! my servant was with me.

Sharp. What, Mrs Kitty? So much the worse: for she was looked upon as my property, and I was brought in guilty, as well as you and my master.

Kitty. What, your property, jackanapes?

Mel. What is all this?

Sharp. Why, madam, as I came out but now, to make preparation for you and your company to-night, Mrs Pry-about, the attorney's wife, at next door, calls to me; 'Hark'e, fellow,' says she, 'do you and your modest master know, that my 'husband shall indict your house at the next 'parish meeting for a nuisance?

Mel. A nuisance!

Sharp. I said so——A nuisance! I believe, none in the neighbourhood live with more decency and regularity than I and my master—as is really the case—'Decency and regulari-'ty!' cries she, with a sneer—'why, sirrah, does 'not my window look into your master's bed-'chamber? and did not he bring in a certain la-'dy such a day?' describing you, madam. 'And 'did not I see——

Mel. See! O, scandalous! What?

Sharp. Modesty requires my silence.

Mel. Did not you contradict her?

Sharp. Contradict her! Why, I told her, I was sure she lied! for, zounds! said I, (for I could not help swearing) I am so well convinced of the lady's and my master's prudence, that I am sure, had they a mind to amuse themselves, they would certainly have drawn the window-curtains.

Mel. What, did you say nothing else? Did not you convince her of her error and impertinence?

Sharp. She swore to such things, that I could do nothing but swear and call names; upon which, out bolts her husband upon me with a fine taper crab in his hand, and fell upon me with such violence, that, being half delirious, I made a full confession.

Mel. A full confession! What did you confess?

Sharp. That my master loved fornication—that you had no aversion to it—that Mrs Kitty was a bawd, and your humble servant a pimp.

Kitty. A bawd! a bawd! Do I look like a bawd, madam?

Sharp. And so, madam, in the scuffle, my coat was torn to pieces, as well as your reputation.

Mel. And so you joined to make me infamous!

Sharp. For Heaven's sake, madam, what could I do? His proofs fell so thick upon me, as witness my head [*Shewing his head plaistered.*], that I would have given up all the maidenheads in the kingdom, rather than have my brains beat to a jelly.

Mel. Very well! but I'll be revenged——And did not you tell your master of this?

Sharp. Tell him! No, madam. Had I told him, his love is so violent for you, that he would certainly have murdered half the attornies in town by this time.

Mel. Very well! But I am resolved not to go to your master's to-night.

Sharp. Heavens and my impudence be praised! [*Aside.*

Kitty. Why not, madam? If you are not guilty, face your accusers.

Sharp. Oh the devil! ruined again! [*Aside.*] To be sure, face them by all means, madam—— They can but be abusive, and break the windows a little——Besides, madam, I have thought of a way to make this affair quite diverting to you—I have a fine blunderbuss, charged with half a hundred slugs, and my master has a delicate large Swiss broad sword; and between us, madam, we shall so pepper and slice them, that you will die with laughing.

Mel. What, at murder?

Kitty. Don't fear, madam; there will be no murder if Sharp's concerned.

Sharp. Murder, madam! 'Tis self-defence.—Besides, in these sort of skirmishes, there are never more than two or three killed: for, supposing they bring the whole body of militia upon us, down but with a brace of them, and away fly the rest of the covey.

Mel. Persuade me ever so much, I won't go; that's my resolution.

Kitty. Why, then, I'll tell you what, madam; since you are resolved not to go to the supper, suppose the supper was to come to you? 'Tis a great pity such preparations as Mr Sharp has made should be thrown away.

Sharp. So it is, as you say, Mrs Kitty. But I can immediately run back, and unbespeak what I have ordered; 'tis soon done.

Mel. But then, what excuse can I send to your master? he'll be very uneasy at my not coming.

Sharp. Oh, terribly so! but I have it—I'll tell him you are very much out of order—that you were suddenly taken with the vapours or qualms, or what you please, madam.

Mel. I'll leave it to you, Sharp, to make my apology; and there's half-a-guinea for you to help your invention.

Sharp. Half-a-guinea! 'Tis so long since I had any thing to do with money, that I scarcely know the current coin of my own country.—Oh, Sharp, what talents hast thou! to secure thy master, deceive his mistress, outlie her chamber-maid, and yet be paid for thy honesty! But my joy will discover me. [*Aside.*] Madam, you have eternally fixed Timothy Sharp, your most obedient humble servant——Oh the delights of impudence, and a good understanding! [*Exit* SHARP.

Kitty. Ha, ha, ha! was there ever such a lying varlet! with his slugs, and his broad swords, his attorneys, and broken heads, and nonsense! Well, madam, are you satisfied now? Do you want more proofs?

Mel. Of your modesty I do: But, I find you are resolved to give me none.

Kitty. Madam!

Mel. I see through your little mean artifice: you are endeavouring to lessen Mr Gayless in my opinion, because he has not paid you for services he had no occasion for.

Kitty. Pay me, madam! I am sure I have very little occasion to be angry with Mr Gayless for not paying me, when I believe 'tis his general practice.

Mel. 'Tis false! he's a gentleman, and a man of honour, and you are——

Kitty. Not in love, I thank Heaven! [*Curtseying.*

Mel. You are a fool.

Kitty. I have been in love; but I am much wiser now.

Mel. Hold your tongue, impertinence!

Kitty. That is the severest thing she has said yet. [*Aside.*

Mel. Leave me.

Kitty. Oh this love, this love is the devil! [*Exit* KITTY.

Mel. We discover our weaknesses to our servants, make them our confidants, put them upon an equality with us, and so they become our advisers. Sharp's behaviour, though I seemed to disregard it, makes me tremble with apprehensions! and, though I have pretended to be angry with Kitty for her advice, I think it of too much consequence to be neglected.

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. May I speak, madam?

Mel. Don't be a fool. What do you want?

Kitty. There is a servant just come out of the country, says he belongs to sir William Gayless, and has got a letter for you from his master upon very urgent business.

Mel. Sir William Gayless? What can this mean? Where is the man?

Kitty. In the little parlour, madam.

Mel. I'll go to him—My heart flutters strangely. [*Exit.*

Kitty. Oh, woman, woman! foolish woman!—she'll certainly have this Gayless;—nay, were she as well convinced of his poverty as I am, she would have him. A strong dose of love is worse than one of ratafia; when it once gets into our heads, it trips up our heels, and then good night to discretion. Here is she going to throw away fifteen thousand pounds! upon what? Faith, little better than nothing. He's a man, and that's all—and, Heaven knows, mere man is but small consolation!

Be this advice pursued by each fond maid,
Ne'er slight the substance for an empty shade:
Rich weighty sparks alone should please and charm ye:
For should spouse cool, his gold will always warm ye.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter GAYLESS *and* SHARP.

Gay. PRITHEE be serious, Sharp. Hast thou really succeeded?

Sharp. To our wishes, sir. In short, I have managed the business with such skill and dexterity, that neither your circumstances nor my veracity are suspected.

Gay. But how hast thou excused me from the ball and entertainment?

Sharp. Beyond expectation, sir—But in that particular, I was obliged to have recourse to truth, and declare the real situation of your affairs. I told her, we had so long disused ourselves to dressing either dinners or suppers, that I was afraid we should be but aukward in our preparations. In short, sir,—at that instant, a cursed gnawing seized my stomach, that I could not help telling her, that both you and myself seldom make a good meal, now-a-days, once in a quarter of a year.

Gay. Hell and confusion! have you betrayed me, villain? Did you not tell me this moment, she did not in the least suspect my circumstances?

Sharp. No more she did, sir, till I told her.

Gay. Very well; and was this your skill and dexterity?

Sharp. I was going to tell you; but you won't hear reason: my melancholy face and piteous narration, had such an effect upon her generous bowels, that she freely forgives all that's past.

Gay. Does she, Sharp?

Sharp. Yes, and desires never to see your face again; and, as a farther consideration for so doing, she has sent you half-a-guinea. [*Shows the money.*

Gay. What do you mean?

Sharp. To spend it, spend it, and regale.

Gay. Villain! you have undone me!

Sharp. What! by bringing you money, when you are not worth a farthing in the whole world Well, well, then, to make you happy again, I'll keep it myself; and wish somebody would take it in their head to load me with such misfortunes. [*Puts up the money.*

Gay. Do you laugh at me, rascal?

Sharp. Who deserves more to be laughed at? ha, ha, ha! Never for the future, sir, dispute the success of my negotiations; when even you, who know me so well, can't help swallowing my

hook. Why, sir, I could have played with you backwards and forwards at the end of my line, till I had put your senses into such a fermentation, that you should not have known, in an hour's time, whether you was a fish or a man.

Gay. Why, what is all this you have been telling me?

Sharp. A downright lie from beginning to end!

Gay. And have you really excused me to her?

Sharp. No, sir; but I have got this half-guinea to make her excuses to you! and instead of a confederacy between you and me to deceive her, she thinks she has brought me over to put the deceit upon you.

Gay. Thou excellent fellow!

Sharp. Don't lose time, but slip out of the house immediately; the back way, I believe, will be the safest for you, and to her as fast as you can; pretend vast surprise and concern, that her indisposition has debarred you the pleasure of her company here to-night. You need know no more; away.

Gay. But what shall we do, Sharp? Here's her maid again.

Sharp. The devil she is!——I wish I could poison her: for I'm sure, while she lives, I can never prosper.

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. Your door was open; so I did not stand upon ceremony.

Gay. I am sorry to hear your mistress is taken so suddenly.—

Kitty. Vapours, vapours only, sir; a few matrimonial omens, that's all; but I suppose Mr Sharp has made her excuses.

Gay. And tells me, I can't have the pleasure of her company to-night. I had made a small preparation; but 'tis no matter: Sharp shall go to the rest of the company, and let them know 'tis put off.

Kitty. Not for the world, sir! my mistress was sensible you must have provided for her and the rest of the company; so she is resolved, though she can't, the other ladies and gentlemen shall partake of your entertainment; she's very good-natured.

Sharp. I had better run, and let them know 'tis deferred. [*Going.*

Kitty. [*Stopping him.*] I have been with them already, and told them my mistress insists upon their coming, and they have all promised to be here; so, pray, don't be under any apprehensions that your preparations will be thrown away.

Gay. But as I can't have her company, Mrs Kitty, 'twill be a greater pleasure to me, and a greater compliment to her, to defer our mirth; besides, I can't enjoy any thing at present, and she not partake of it.

Kitty. Oh, no! to be sure; but what can I do? my mistress will have it so; and Mrs Gadabout, and the rest of the company, will be here in a few minutes; there are two or three coach-fuls of them.

Sharp. Then my master must be ruined, in spite of my parts. [*Aside.*

Gay. [*Aside to Sharp.*] 'Tis all over, Sharp!

Sharp. I know it, sir.

Gay. I shall go distracted! what shall I do?

Sharp. Why, sir, as our rooms are a little out of furniture at present, take them into the captain's that lodges here, and set them down to cards: if he should come in the mean time, I'll excuse you to him. [*Aside.*

Kitty. I have disconcerted their affairs, I find; I'll have some sport with them. Pray, Mr Gayless, don't order too many things: they only make you a friendly visit; the more ceremony, you know, the less welcome. Pray, sir, let me entreat you not to be profuse. If I can be of service, pray command me; my mistress has sent me on purpose: while Mr Sharp is doing the business without doors, I may be employed within. If you'll lend me the keys of your side-board [*To Sharp*], I'll dispose of your plate to the best advantage.

Sharp. Thank you, Mrs Kitty; but it is disposed of already. [*Knocking at the door.*

Kitty. Bless me, the company's come! I'll go to the door, and conduct them into your presence. [*Exit* KITTY.

Sharp. If you'd conduct them into a horse-pond, and wait on them there yourself, we should be more obliged to you.

Gay. I can never support this.

Sharp. Rouse your spirits, and put on an air of gaiety, and I don't despair of bringing you off yet.

Gay. Your words have done it effectually.

Enter MRS GAD-ABOUT, MR GUTTLE, MR TRIPPET, *and* MRS TRIPPET.

Gad. Ah, my dear Mr Gayless! [*Kisses him.*

Gay. My dear widow! [*Kisses her.*

Gad. We are come to give you joy, Mr Gayless!

Sharp. You never was more mistaken in your life. [*Aside.*

Gad. I have brought some company here, I believe, is not well known to you; and I protest I have been all about the town to get the little I have——Mr Guttle, sir, Mr Gayless;—Mr Gayless, justice Guttle.

Sharp. Oh, destruction! one of the quorum.

Gut. Hem! Though I had not the honour of any personal knowledge of you, yet, at the instigation of Mrs Gadabout, I have, without any previous acquaintance with you, throwed aside all ceremony, to let you know, that I joy to hear the solemnization of your nuptials is so near at hand.

Gay. Sir, though I cannot answer you with the same elocution, however, sir, I thank you with the same sincerity.

Gad. Mr and Mrs Trippet, sir; the properest lady in the world for your purpose, for she'll dance for four and twenty hours together.

Trip. My dear Charles, I am very angry with you, faith; so near marriage, and not let me know! 'twas barbarous: you thought, I suppose, I should rally you upon it; but dear Mrs Trippet here has long ago eradicated all my antimatrimonial principles.

Mrs Trip. I eradicate! fie, Mr Trippet! don't be so obscene.

Kitty. Pray, ladies, walk into the next room; Mr Sharp can't lay his cloth till you are set down to cards.

Gad. One thing I had quite forgot, Mr Gayless: my nephew, whom you never saw, will be in town from France presently; so I left word to send him here immediately to make one.

Gay. You do me honour, madam.

Sharp. Do the ladies choose cards, or the supper first?

Gay. Supper! what does the fellow mean?

Gut. Oh! the supper by all means; for I have eaten nothing to signify since dinner.

Sharp. Nor I, since last Monday was a fortnight. [*Aside.*

Gay. Pray, ladies, walk into the next room: Sharp, get things ready for supper, and call the music.

Sharp. Well said, master!

Gad. Without ceremony, ladies.

[*Exeunt ladies.*

Kitty. I'll go to my mistress, and let her know every thing is ready for her appearance.

[*Exit* KITTY.

Enter GUTTLE *and* SHARP.

Gut. Pray, Mr What's-your-name, don't be long with supper: But harkee, what can I do in the mean time? Suppose you get me a pipe and some good wine; I'll try to divert myself that way till supper's ready.

Sharp. Or suppose, sir, you was to take a nap till then; there's a very easy couch in that closet.

Gut. The best thing in the world; I'll take your advice; but be sure you wake me when supper is ready. [*Exit* GUTTLE.

Sharp. Pray heaven, you may not wake till then—What a fine situation my master is in at present! I have promised him my assistance; but his affairs are in so desperate a way, that I am afraid 'tis out of my skill to recover him. Well, fools have fortune, says an old proverb, and a very true one it is; for my master and I are two of the most unfortunate mortals in the creation.

Enter GAYLESS.

Gay. Well, Sharp, I have set them down to cards; and now what have you to propose?

Sharp. I have one scheme left, which, in all probability, may succeed. The good citizen, overloaded with his last meal, is taking a nap in that closet, in order to get him an appetite for yours. Suppose, sir, we should make him treat us.

Gay. I don't undersand you.

Sharp. I'll pick his pocket, and provide us a supper with the booty.

Gay. Monstrous! for without considering the villany of it, the danger of waking him makes it impracticable!

Sharp. If he awakes, I'll smother him, and lay his death to indigestion—a very common death among the justices.

Gay. Prithee be serious; we have no time to lose; can you invent nothing to drive them out of the house?

Sharp. I can fire it.

Gay. Shame and confusion so perplex me I cannot give myself a moment's thought.

Sharp. I have it; did not Mrs Gad-about say her nephew would be here?

Gay. She did.

Sharp. Say no more, but in to your company: if I don't send them out of the house for the night, I'll at least frighten their stomachs away; and if this stratagem fails, I'll relinquish politics, and think my understanding no better than my neighbour's.

Gay. How shall I reward thee, Sharp?

Sharp. By your silence and obedience: away to your company, sir. [*Exit* GAYLESS.]—Now, dear madam Fortune, for once open your eyes, and behold a poor unfortunate man of parts addressing you: now is your time to convince your foes you are not that blind, whimsical whore, they take you for; but let them see, by your assisting me, that men of sense, as well as fools, are sometimes intitled to your favour and protection.——So much for prayer; now for a great noise and a lie. [*Goes aside, and cries out.*] Help, help, master! help, gentlemen, ladies! Murder, fire, brimstone?——Help, help, help!

Enter MR GAYLESS *and the ladies with cards in their hands, and* SHARP *enters, running, and meets them.*

Gay. What's the matter?

Sharp. Matter, sir! if you don't run this minute with that gentleman, this lady's nephew will be murdered! I am sure it was he; he was set upon at the corner of the street by four; he has killed two; and if you don't make haste, he'll be either murdered, or took to prison.

Gad. For Heaven's sake, gentlemen, run to his assistance! How I tremble for Melissa!—This frolic of her's may be fatal. [*Aside.*

Gay. Draw, sir, and follow me.

[*Exeunt* GAYLESS *and* GAD.

Trip. Not I; I don't care to run myself into needless quarrels; I have suffered too much for-

merly by flying into passions: besides, I have pawned my honour to Mrs Trippet, never to draw my sword again; and, in her present condition, to break my word might have fatal consequences.

Sharp. Pray, sir, don't excuse yourself; the young gentleman may be murdered by this time.

Trip. Then my assistance will be of no service to him; however—I'll go to oblige you, and look on at a distance.

Mrs Trip. I shall certainly faint, Mr Trippet, if you draw.

Enter GUTTLE, *disordered, as from sleep.*

Gut. What noise and confusion is this?

Sharp. Sir, there's a man murdered in the street.

Gut. Is that all? Zounds! I was afraid you had thrown the supper down—A plague of your noise——I shan't recover my stomach this half hour.

Enter GAYLESS *and* GAD-ABOUT, *with* MELISSA *in boy's clothes, dressed in the French manner.*

Gad. Well, but my dear Jemmy, you are not hurt, sure?

Mel. A little with riding post only.

Gad. Mr Sharp alarmed us all with an account of your being set upon by four men; that you had killed two, and was attacking the other when he came away; and when we met you at the door, we were running to your rescue.

Mel. I had a small rencounter with half a-dozen villains; but, finding me resolute, they were wise enough to take to their heels: I believe I scratched some of them.

[*Laying her hand to her sword.*

Sharp. His vanity has saved my credit. I have a thought come into my head may prove to our advantage, provided Monsieur's ignorance bears any proportion to his impudence. [*Aside.*

Gad. Now my fright's over, let me introduce you, my dear, to Mr Gayless. Sir, this is my nephew.

Gay. [*Saluting her.*] Sir, I shall be proud of your friendship.

Mel. I don't doubt but we shall be better acquainted in a little time.

Gut. Pray, sir, what news in France?

Mel. Faith, sir, very little that I know of in the political way: I had no time to spend among the politicians. I was——

Gay. Among the ladies, I suppose?

Mel. Too much indeed. Faith, I have not philosophy enough to resist their solicitations; you take me? [*To* GAYLESS *aside.*

Gay. Yes, to be a most incorrigible fop: 'Sdeath, this puppy's impertinence is an addition to my misery. [*Aside to* SHARP.

Mel. Poor Gayless! to what shifts is he reduced? I cannot bear to see him much longer in this condition; I shall discover myself.

[*Aside to* GAD-ABOUT.

Gad. Not before the end of the play: besides, the more his pain now, the greater his pleasure when relieved from it.

Trip. Shall we return to our cards? I have a *sans prendre* here, and must insist you play it out.

Ladies. With all my heart!

Mel. Allons donc.—[*As the company goes out,* SHARP *pulls* MELISSA *by the sleeve.*]

Sharp. Sir, sir! Shall I beg leave to spea with you? Pray, did you find a bank-note in your way hither?

Mel. What, between here and Dover, do you mean?

Sharp. No, sir, within twenty or thirty yards of this house.

Mel. You are drunk, fellow!

Sharp. I am undone, sir, but not drunk, I'll assure you.

Mel. What is all this?

Sharp. I'll tell you, sir: A little while ago, my master sent me out to change a note of twenty pounds; but I, unfortunately, hearing a noise in the street of, Damn-me, sir! and clashing of swords, and Rascal, and Murder! I runs up to the place, and saw four men upon one: and having heard you was a mettlesome young gentleman, I immediately concluded it must be you; so ran back to call my master; and when I went to look for the note to change it, I found it gone, either stole or lost; and if I don't get the money immediately, I shall certainly be turned out of my place, and lose my character——

Mel. I shall laugh in his face. [*Aside.*]—Oh, I'll speak to your master about it, and he will forgive you, at my intercession.

Sharp. Ah, sir, you don't know my master.

Mel. I'm very little acquainted with him; but I have heard he's a very good-natured man.

Sharp. I have heard so too; but I have felt it otherwise: he has so much good-nature, that if I could compound for one broken-head a day, I should think myself very well off.

Mel. Are you serious, friend?

Sharp. Look'e, sir, I take you for a man of honour; there is something in your face that is generous, open, and masculine; you don't look like a foppish effeminate tell-tale; so I'll venture to trust you——See here, sir, [*Shews his head.*] these are the effects of my master's good-nature.

Mel. Matchless impudence! [*Aside.*]—Why do you live with him, then, after such usage?

Sharp. He's worth a great deal of money; and when he's drunk, which is commonly once a-day, he's very free, and will give me any thing: but I design to leave him when he's married, for all that.

Mel. Is he going to be married then?

Sharp. To-morrow, sir; and between you and I, he'll meet with his match, both for humour and something else too.

Mel. What! she drinks, too?

Sharp. Damnably, sir; but mum—You must know this entertainment was designed for madam to-night; but she got so very gay after dinner, that she could not walk out of her own house; so her maid, who was half gone too, came here with an excuse, that Mrs Melissa had got the vapours: and so she had indeed violently, here, here, sir. [*Pointing to his head.*

Mel. This is scarcely to be borne. [*Aside.*]—Melissa! I have heard of her; they say she's very whimsical.

Sharp. A very woman, an't please your honour; and, between you and I, none of the mildest and wisest of her sex—But to return, sir, to the twenty pounds.

Mel. I am surprised, you, who have got so much money in his service, should be at a loss for twenty pound, to save your bones at this juncture.

Sharp. I have put all my money out at interest; I never keep above five pounds by me; and if your honour would lend me the other fifteen, and take my note for it—

[*Knocking.*

Mel. Somebody's at the door.

Sharp. I can give very good security.

[*Knocking.*

Mel. Don't let the people wait, Mr.——

Sharp. Ten pounds will do. [*Knocking.*

Mel. Allez vous en.

Sharp. Five, sir. [*Knocking.*

Mel. Je ne puis pas.

Sharp. Je ne puis pas!—I find we shan't understand one another; I do but lose time; and if I had any thought, I might have known these young fops return from their travels generally with as little money as improvement.

[*Exit* SHARP.

Mel. Ha, ha, ha! what lies does this fellow invent, and what rogueries does he commit, for his master's service! There never, sure, was a more faithful servant to his master, or a greater rogue to the rest of mankind. But here he comes again: the plot thickens; I'll in, and observe Gayless. [*Exit* MELISSA.

Enter SHARP, *before several persons, with dishes in their hands, and a Cook drunk.*

Sharp. Fortune, I thank thee! the most lucky accident! [*Aside.*]—This way, gentlemen; this way.

Cook. I am afraid I have mistook the house. Is this Mr Treatwell's?

Sharp. The same, the same: What, don't you know me?

Cook. Know you!—Are you sure there was a supper bespoke here?

Sharp. Yes, upon my honour, Mr Cook; the company is in the next room, and must have gone without, had not you brought it. I'll draw a table. I see you have brought a cloth with you; but you need not have done that, for we have a very good stock of linen—at the pawnbroker's.

[*Aside.*

[*Exit, and returns immediately, drawing in a table.*

Come, come, my boys, be quick; the company began to be very uneasy; but I knew my old friend Lick-spit here would not fail us.

Cook. Lick-spit! I am no friend of your's; so I desire less familiarity: Lick-spit, too!

Enter GAYLESS, *and stares.*

Gay. What is all this?

Sharp. Sir, if the sight of the supper is offensive, I can easily have it removed.

[*Aside to* GAYLESS.

Gay. Prithee, explain thyself, Sharp.

Sharp. Some of our neighbours, I suppose, have bespoke this supper; but the cook has drank away his memory, forgot the house, and brought it here: however, sir, if you dislike it, I'll tell him of his mistake, and send him about his business.

Gay. Hold, hold! necessity obliges me, against my inclination, to favour the cheat, and feast at my neighbour's expence.

Cook. Hark you, friend, is that your master?

Sharp. Ay; and the best master in the world.

Cook. I'll speak to him then—sir, I have, according to your commands, dressed as genteel a supper as my art and your price would admit of.

Sharp. Good again, sir; 'tis paid for.

[*Aside to* GAYLESS.

Gay. I don't in the least question your abilities, Mr Cook; and I'm obliged to you for your care.

Cook. Sir, you are a gentleman—And if you would look but over the bill, and approve it, [*Pulls out a bill.*] you will, over and above, return the obligation.

Sharp. Oh, the devil!

Gay. [*Looking on a bill.*] Very well, I'll send my man to pay you to-morrow.

Cook. I'll spare him the trouble, and take it with me, sir——I never work but for ready money.

Gay. Ha!

Sharp. Then you won't have our custom—— [*Aside.*]——My master is busy now, friend: Do you think he won't pay you?

Cook. No matter what I think; either my meat, or my money.

Sharp. 'Twill be very ill-convenient for him to pay you to-night.

Cook. Then I'm afraid it will be ill-convenient to pay me to-morrow; so, d'ye hear——

Enter MELISSA.

Gay. Prithee be advised: 'sdeath, I shall be discovered! [*Takes the Cook aside.*

Mel. [*To* SHARP.] What's the matter?

Sharp. The cook has not quite answered my master's expectations about the supper, sir, and he's a little angry at him; that's all.

Mel. Come, come, Mr Gayless, don't be uneasy; a batchelor cannot be supposed to have things in the utmost regularity; we don't expect it.

Cook. But I do expect it, and will have it.

Mel. What does that drunken fool say?

Cook. That I will have my money, and I won't stay till to-morrow—and—and——

Sharp. [*Runs and stops his mouth.*] Hold, hold! what are you doing? Are you mad?

Mel. What do you stop the man's breath for?

Sharp. Sir, he was going to call you names.—Don't be abusive, Cook; the gentleman is a man of honour, and said nothing to you: pray be pacified; you are in liquor.

Cook. I will have my——

Sharp. [*Holding still.*] Why, I tell you, fool, you mistake the gentleman; he's a friend of my master's, and has not said a word to you. Pray, good sir, go into the next room; the fellow's drunk, and takes you for another.—You'll repent this when you are sober, friend.—Pray, sir, don't stay to hear his impertinence.

Gay. Pray, sir, walk in—He's below your anger.

Mel. Damn the rascal! What does he mean by affronting me?——Let the scoundrel go; I'll polish his brutality, I warrant you. Here's the best reformer of manners in the universe. [*Draws his sword.*] Let him go, I say!

Sharp. So, so, you have done finely now—Get away as fast as you can; he's the most courageous, mettlesome man, in all England——Why, if his passion was up, he could eat you—Make your escape, you fool.

Cook. I won't—eat me! he'll find me damned hard of digestion, though——

Sharp. Prithee, come here; let me speak with you. [*They walk aside.*

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. Gad's me! is supper on the table already? Sir, pray defer it for a few moments; my mistress is much better, and will be here immediately.

Gay. Will she, indeed? Bless me!—I did not expect—but however—Sharp!

Kitty. What success, madam? [*Aside to* MELISSA.

Mel. As we could wish, girl; but he is in such pain and perplexity, I can't hold it out much longer.

Kitty. Ay; that holding out is the ruin of half our sex.

Sharp. I have pacified the cook; and if you can but borrow twenty pieces of that young prig, all may go well yet: you may succeed, though I could not. Remember what I told you—about it straight, sir——

Gay. Sir, sir—[*To* MELISSA.]—I beg to speak a word with you: my servant, sir, tells me he has had the misfortune, sir, to lose a note of mine of twenty pounds, which I sent him to receive—and the bankers' shops being shut up, and having very little cash by me, I should be much obliged to you if you would favour me with twenty pieces till to-morrow.

Mel. Oh, sir, with all my heart—[*Taking out her purse.*]—and as I have a small favour to beg of you, sir, the obligation will be mutual.

Gay. How may I oblige you, sir?

Mel. You are to be married, I hear, to Melissa?

Gay. To-morrow, sir.

Mel. Then you'll oblige me, sir, by never seeing her again.

Gay. Do you call this a small favour, sir?

Mel. A mere trifle, sir; breaking of contracts, suing for divorces, committing adultery, and such like, are all reckoned trifles now-a-days: and smart young fellows, like you and myself, Gayless, should be never out of fashion.

Gay. But, pray, sir, how are you concerned in this affair?

Mel. Oh, sir, you must know I have a very great regard for Melissa, and indeed she for me: and, by the by, I have a most despicable opinion of you; for, *entre nous*, I take you, Charles, to be a very great scoundrel.

Gay. Sir!

Mel. Nay, don't look fierce, sir, and give yourself airs—Damme, sir, I shall be through your body, else, in the snapping of a finger!

Gay. I'll be as quick as you, villain! [*Draws, and makes at* MELISSA.

Kit. Hold, hold! murder! You'll kill my mistress—the young gentleman, I mean.

Gay. Ah, her mistress! [*Drops his sword.*

Sharp. How! Melissa! Nay, then, drive away cart—all's over now.

Enter all the company, laughing.

Gad. What, Mr Gayless, engaging with Melissa before your time? Ha, ha, ha!

Kitty. Your humble servant, good Mr Politician—[*To* SHARP.]—This is, gentlemen and ladies, the most celebrated and ingenious Timothy Sharp, schemer-general, and redoubted squire to the most renowned and fortunate adventurer, Charles Gayless, knight of the woeful countenance: ha, ha, ha! Oh, that dismal face, and more dismal head of yours! [*Strikes* SHARP *upon the head.*

Sharp. 'Tis cruel in you to disturb a man in his last agonies.

Mel. Now, Mr Gayless! What, not a word? You are sensible I can be no stranger to your

misfortunes; and I might reasonably expect an excuse for your ill treatment of me.

Gay. No, madam, silence is my only refuge; for to endeavour to vindicate my crimes, would show a greater want of virtue than even the commission of them.

Mel. Oh, Gayless! 'twas poor to impose upon a woman, and one that loved you, too!

Gay. Oh, most unpardonable! but my necessities——

Sharp. And mine, madam, were not to be matched, I'm sure, o' this side starving.

Mel. His tears have softened me at once—— Your necessities, Mr Gayless, with such real contrition, are too powerful motives not to affect the breast already prejudiced in your favour. You have suffered too much already for your extravagance; and as I take part in your sufferings, 'tis easing myself to relieve you: Know, therefore, all that's past I freely forgive.

Gay. You cannot mean it, sure? I am lost in wonder!

Mel. Prepare yourself for more wonder—You have another friend in masquerade here. Mr Cook, pray throw aside your drunkenness, and make your sober appearance. Don't you know that face, sir?

Cook. Ay, master! what, have you forgot your friend Dick, as you used to call me?

Gay. More wonder indeed! Don't you live with my father?

Mel. Just after your hopeful servant, there, had left me, comes this man from sir William with a letter to me; upon which (being by that wholly convinced of your necessitous condition) I invented, by the help of Kitty and Mrs Gadabout, this little plot, in which your friend Dick, there, has acted miracles, resolving to tease you a little, that you might have a greater relish for a happy turn in your affairs. Now, sir, read that letter, and complete your joy.

Gay. [*Reads.*]—'Madam, I am father to the 'unfortunate young man, who, I hear, by a friend 'of mine (that by my desire has been a continu-'al spy upon him), is making his addresses to 'you: if he is so happy as to make himself 'agreeable to you (whose character I am charm-'ed with), I shall own him with joy for my son, 'and forget his former follies.

'I am, madam,

'Your most humble servant,

'WILLIAM GAYLESS.'

'P. S. I will be soon in town myself, to con-'gratulate his late reformation and marriage.'

Oh, Melissa, this is too much! Thus let me show my thanks and gratitude—[*Kneeling, she raises him.*]—for here 'tis only due.

Sharp. A reprieve! A reprieve! A reprieve!

Kitty. I have been, sir, a most bitter enemy to you; but, since you are likely to be a little more conversant with cash than you have been, I am now, with the greatest sincerity, your most obedient friend, and humble servant. And I hope, sir, all former enmity will be forgotten.

Gay. Oh, Mrs Pry, I have been too much indulged with forgiveness myself, not to forgive lesser offences in other people.

Sharp. Well, then, madam, since my master has vouchsafed pardon to your handmaid Kitty, I hope you'll not deny it to his footman Timothy?

Mel. Pardon! for what?

Sharp. Only for telling you about ten thousand lies, madam; and, among the rest, insinuating that your ladyship would——

Mel. I understand you; and can forgive any thing, Sharp, that was designed for the service of your master: and if Pry and you will follow our example, I'll give her a small fortune as a reward for both your fidelities.

Sharp. I fancy, madam, 'twould be better to halve the small fortune between us, and keep us both single; for as we shall live in the same house, in all probability we may taste the comforts of matrimony, and not be troubled with its inconveniences—What say you, Kitty?

Kitty. Do you hear, Sharp? before you talk of the comforts of matrimony, taste the comforts of a good dinner, and recover your flesh a little; do, puppy.

Sharp. The devil backs her, that's certain! and I am no match for her at any weapon.

Mel. And now, Mr Gayless, to show I have not provided for you by halves, let the music prepare themselves, and, with the approbation of the company, we'll have a dance.

All. By all means a dance!

Gut. By all means a dance——after supper, though.

Sharp. Oh, pray, sir, have supper first; or I'm sure I shan't live till the dance is finished.

Gay. Behold, Melissa, as sincere a convert as ever truth and beauty made. The wild impetuous sallies of my youth are now blown over, and a most pleasing calm of perfect happiness succeeds.

Thus Ætna's flames the verdant earth consume,
But milder heat makes drooping nature bloom:
So virtuous love affords us springing joy,
Whilst vicious passions, as they burn, destroy.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

MISS IN HER TEENS.

BY

GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
Sir Simon, *father to* Captain Loveit.	Miss Biddy, *attached to* Captain Loveit.
Captain Loveit, *attached to* Miss Biddy.	Tag, *maid to* Miss Biddy.
Fribble, *a coxcomb.*	
Flash, *a bullying coward.*	
Puff, *servant to* Captain Loveit.	
Jasper, *servant to* Sir Simon.	

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A street.*

Enter Captain Loveit *and* Puff.

Capt. This is the place we were directed to; and now, Puff, if I can get no intelligence of her, what will become of me?

Puff. And me too, sir?—You must consider I am a married man, and can't bear fatigue as I have done. But, pray, sir, why did you leave the army so abruptly, and not give me time to fill my knapsack with common necessaries? Half a dozen shirts, and your regimentals, are my whole cargo.

Capt. I was wild to get away; and as soon as I obtained my leave of absence, I thought every moment an age till I returned to the place where I first saw this young, charming, innocent, bewitching creature.

Puff. With fifteen thousand pounds for her fortune—strong motives, I must confess.—And now, sir, as you are pleased to say you must depend upon my care and abilities in this affair, I think I have a just right to be acquainted with the particulars of your passion, that I may be the better enabled to serve you.

Capt. You shall have them.—When I left the university, which is now seven months since, my father, who loves his money better than his son, and would not settle a farthing upon me—

Puff. Mine did so by me, sir——

Capt. Purchased me a pair of colours at my own request; but before I joined the regiment, which was going abroad, I took a ramble into the country with a fellow-collegian, to see a relation of his who lived in Berkshire——

Puff. A party of pleasure, I suppose?

Capt. During a short stay there, I came acquainted with this young creature: she was just come from the boarding-school; and though she had all the simplicity of her age, and the country, yet it was mixed with such sensible vivacity, that I took fire at once.——

Puff. I was tinder myself at your age. But pray, sir, did you take fire before you knew of her fortune?

Capt. Before, upon my honour!

Puff. Folly and constitution—But on, sir.

Capt. I was introduced to the family by the name of Rodophil (for so my companion and I had settled it): at the end of three weeks I was obliged to attend the call of honour in Flanders; but——

Puff. Your parting, to be sure, was heart-breaking?

Capt. I feel it at this instant. We vowed eternal constancy, and I promised to take the first opportunity of returning to her. I did so; but we found the house was shut up; and all the information, you know, that we could get from the neighbouring cottage was, that miss and her aunt were removed to town, and lived somewhere near this part of it.

Puff. And now we are got to the place of action, propose your plan of operation.

Capt. My father lives in the next street, so I must decamp immediately, for fear of discoveries: you are not known to be my servant; go, make what inquiries you can in the neighbourhood, and I shall wait at the inn for your intelligence.

Puff. I'll patrol hereabouts, and examine all that pass; but I've forgot the word, sir—Miss Biddy—

Capt. Bellair——

Puff. A young lady of wit, beauty, and fifteen thousand pounds fortune—But, sir—

Capt. What do you say, Puff?

Puff. If your honour pleases to consider, that I had a wife in town whom I left somewhat abruptly half-a-year ago, you'll think it, I believe, but decent to make some inquiry after her first: to be sure, it would be some small consolation to me to know whether the poor woman is living, or has made away with herself, or——

Capt. Prithee don't distract me; a moment's delay is of the utmost consequence; I must insist upon an immediate compliance with my commands. [*Exit* CAPTAIN.

Puff. The devil's in these fiery young fellows! they think of nobody's wants but their own. He does not consider that I am flesh and blood as well as himself. However, I may kill two birds at once: for I shan't be surprised if I meet my lady walking the streets—But, who have we here? Sure I should know that face.

Enter JASPER *from a house.*

Who's that? my old acquaintance Jasper!

Jas. What, Puff! are you here?

Puff. My dear friend! [*Kissing him.*] Well, and now, Jasper, still easy and happy? *Toujours le meme!* What intrigues now? What girls have you ruined, and what cuckolds made, since you and I used to beat up together, eh?

Jas. Faith, business has been very brisk during the war; men are scarce, you know: not that I can say I ever wanted amusement in the worst of times—But hark ye, Puff——

Puff. Not a word aloud; I am incognito.

Jas. Why, faith, I should not have known you, if you had not spoke first; you seem to be a little dishabille too, as well as incognito. Whom do you honour with your service now? Are you from the wars?

Puff. Piping hot, I asure you; fire and smoke will tarnish: a man that will go into such service as I have been in, will find his clothes the worse for the wear, take my word for it. But how is it with you, friend Jasper? What, you still serve, I see? you live at that house, I suppose?

Jas. I don't absolutely live, but I am most of my time there. I have, within these two months, entered into the service of an old gentleman, who hired a reputable servant, and dressed him as you see, because he has taken it into his head to fall in love.

Puff. False appetite, and second childhood! But, prithee, what's the object of his passion?

Jas. No less than a virgin of sixteen, I can assure you.

Puff. Oh the toothless old dotard!

Jas. And he mumbles and plays with her till his mouth waters; then he chuckles till he cries, and calls her his Bid and his Bidsy; and is so foolishly fond——

Puff. Bidsy! what's that?—

Jas. Her name is Biddy.

Puff. Biddy! What, Miss Biddy Bellair?

Jas. The same—

Puff. I have no luck, to be sure. [*Aside.*]—Oh, I have heard of her; she's of a pretty good family, and has some fortune, I know. But are things settled? Is the marriage fixed?

Jas. Not absolutely; the girl, I believe, detests him; but her aunt, a very good, prudent, old lady, has given her consent, if he can gain her niece's: how it will end, I can't tell—but I'm hot upon't myself.

Puff. The devil! not marriage, I hope?

Jas. That is not yet determined.

Puff. Who is the lady, pray?

Jas. A maid in the same family; a woman of honour, I assure you. She has one husband already, a scoundrel sort of a fellow, that has run away from her, and listed for a soldier; so, towards the end of the campaign, she hopes to have a certificate he's knocked o' the head: if not, I suppose, we shall settle matters another way.

Puff. Well, speed the plough!—But hark ye? consummate without the certificate if you can—keep your neck out of the collar—do—I have wore it these two years, and damnably galled I am.

Jas. I'll take your advice; but I must run away to my master, who will be impatient for an answer to his message, which I have just delivered to the young lady: so, dear Mr Puff, I am your most obedient humble servant.

Puff. And I must to our agents for my arrears: if you have an hour to spare, you'll hear

of me at George's, or the Tilt-yard—*Au revoir*, as we say abroad. [*Exit* JASPER.] Thus, we are as civil and as false as our betters: Jasper and I were always the beau monde exactly; we ever hated one another heartily, yet always kiss and shake hands—But now to my master, with a headful of news, and a heartful of joy!

[*Going, starts.*

'Angels and ministers of grace defend me!'

It can't be! By Heavens, it is, that fretful porcupine, my wife! I can't stand it; what shall I do?—I'll try to avoid her.

Enter TAG.

Tag. It must be he! I'll swear to the rogue at a mile's distance: he either has not seen me, or won't know me. If I can keep my temper, I'll try him farther.

Puff. I sweat!—I tremble!—She comes upon me!

Tag. Pray, good sir, if I may be so bold—

Puff. I have nothing for you, good woman; don't trouble me.

Tag. If your honour pleases to look this way—

Puff. The kingdom is overrun with beggars. I suppose the last I gave to has sent this: but I have no more loose silver about me: so, prithee, woman, don't disturb me.

Tag. I can hold no longer. Oh, you villain, you! where have you been, scoundrel? Do you know me now, varlet? [*Seizes him.*

Puff. Here, watch, watch! Zounds, I shall have my pockets picked!

Tag. Own me this minute, hang-dog, and confess every thing, or, by the rage of an injured woman, I'll raise the neighbourhood, throttle you, and send you to Newgate!

Puff. Amazement! what, my own dear Tag! Come to my arms, and let me press you to my heart, that pants for thee, and only thee, my true and lawful wife!—Now my stars have overpaid me for the fatigue and dangers of the field. I have wandered about, like Achilles, in search of faithful Penelope; and the gods have brought me to this happy spot. [*Embraces her.*

Tag. The fellow's crackt for certain! Leave your bombastic stuff, and tell me, rascal, why you left me, and where you have been these six months, heh?

Puff. We'll reserve my adventures for our happy winter evenings—I shall only tell you now, that my heart beat so strong in my country's cause, and being instigated either by honour or the devil (I can't tell which), I set out for Flanders to gather laurels, and lay them at thy feet.

Tag. You left me to starve, villain, and beg my bread, you did so.

Puff. I left you too hastily, I must confess; and often has my conscience stung me for it—I am got into an officer's service, have been in several actions, gained some credit by my behaviour, and am now returned with my master to indulge the gentler passions.

Tag. Don't think to fob me off with this nonsensical talk. What have you brought me home besides?

Puff. Honour, and immoderate love.

Tag. I could tear your eyes out!

Puff. Temperance, or I walk off.

Tag. Temperance, traitor! temperance! What can you say for yourself? Leave me to the wide world!

Puff. Well, I have been in the world too, han't I? What would the woman have?

Tag. Reduce me to the necessity of going to service! [*Cries.*

Puff. Why, I'm in service too, your lord and master, an't I, you saucy jade, you?—Come, where dost live? here about? Hast got good vails? Dost go to market? Come, give me a kiss, darling, and tell me where I shall pay my duty to thee.

Tag. Why, there I live, at that house.

[*Pointing to the house* JASPER *came out of.*

Puff. What! there! that house?

Tag. Yes, there; that house.

Puff. Huzza! We're made for ever, you slut you; huzza! Every thing conspires this day to make me happy! Prepare for an inundation of joy! My master is in love with your Miss Biddy over head and ears, and she with him. I know she is courted by some old fumbler, and her aunt is not against the match; but now we are come, the town will be relieved, and the governor brought over: in plain English, our fortune is made; my master must marry the lady, and the old gentleman may go to the devil.

Tag. Heyday! what's all this?

Puff. Say no more; the dice are thrown doublets for us: away to your young mistress, while I run to my master. Tell her Rhodophil, Rhodophil will be with her immediately; then, if her blood does not mount to her face, like quicksilver in a weather-glass, and point to extreme hot, believe the whole a lie, and your husband no politician.

Tag. This is news indeed! I have had the place but a little while, and have not quite got into the secrets of the family: but part of your story is true; and if you bring your master, and miss is willing, I warrant we'll be too hard for the old folks.

Puff. I'll about it straight——But hold, Tag; I had forgot—Pray how does Mr Jasper do?

Tag. Mr Jasper!—What do you mean? I—I—I—

Puff. What! out of countenance, child?—O fie! speak plain, my dear——And the certificate; when comes that, eh, love?

Tag. He has sold himself, and turned conjurer, or he could never have known it. [*Aside.*

Puff. Are not you a jade?—are not you a Jezebel?—arn't you a———

Tag. O ho! temperance, or I walk off.

Puff. I know I am not finished yet, and so I am easy; but more thanks to my fortune than your virtue, madam.

Bid. [*Within*] Tag, Tag! where are you, Tag?

Tag. Coming, madam!——My lady calls—away to your master, and I'll prepare his reception within.

Puff. Shall I bring the certificate with me?

[*Exit* PUFF.

Tag. Go, you graceless rogue! you richly deserve it. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to a chamber.*

Enter BIDDY.

Bid. How unfortunate a poor girl am I! dare not tell my secret to any body; and, if I don't, I'm undone—Heigh ho! [*Sighs.*] Pray, Tag, is my aunt gone to her lawyer about me?—Heigh ho!

Tag. What's that sigh for, my dear young mistress?

Bid. I did not sigh, not I——— [*Sighs.*

Tag. Nay, never gulp them down; they are the worst things you can swallow. There's something in that little heart of yours, that swells it, and puffs it, and will burst it at last, if you don't give it vent.

Bid. What would you have me tell you?

[*Sighs.*

Tag. Come, come; you are afraid I'll betray you: but you had as good speak; I may do you some service you little think of.

Bid. It is not in your power, Tag, to give me what I want. [*Sighs.*

Tag. Not directly, perhaps; but I may be the means of helping you to it. As, for example—if you should not like to marry the old man your aunt designs for you, one may find a way to break———

Bid. His neck, Tag?

Tag. Or the match; either will do, child.

Bid. I don't care which, indeed, so I was clear of him———I don't think I am fit to be married.

Tag. To him you mean! You have no objection to marriage, but the man; and I applaud you for it. But come, courage, miss; never keep it in: out with it all.

Bid. If you'll ask me any questions, I'll answer them; but I can't tell you any thing of myself; I shall blush if I do.

Tag. Well, then; in the first place, pray tell me, Miss Biddy Bellair, if you don't like somebody better than old sir Simon Loveit?

Bid. Heigh ho!

Tag. What's heigho, miss?

Bid. When I say heigh ho, it means yes.

Tag. Very well: and this somebody is a young handsome fellow?

Bid. Heigh ho!

Tag. And if you were once his, you'd be as merry as the best of us?

Bid. Heigh ho!

Tag. So far so good! and since I have got you to wet your feet, souce over head at once, and the pain will be over.

Bid. There—then. [*A long sigh.*] Now, help me out, Tag, as fast as you can.

Tag. When did you hear from your gallant?

Bid. Never since he went to the army.

Tag. How so?

Bid. I was afraid the letters would fall into my aunt's hands, so I would not let him write to me: but I had a better reason then.

Tag. Pray, let's hear that, too.

Bid. Why, I thought if I should write to him, and promise him to love nobody else, and should afterwards change my mind, he might think I was inconstant, and call me a coquette.

Tag. What a simple innocent it is! [*Aside.*] And have you changed your mind, miss?

Bid. No, indeed, Tag; I love him the best of any of them.

Tag. Of any of them! Why, have you any more?

Bid. Pray, don't ask me.

Tag. Nay, miss, if you only trust me by halves, you can't expect———

Bid. I will trust you with every thing. When I parted with him, I grew melancholy; so, in order to divert me, I have let two others court me till he return again.

Tag. Is that all, my dear? Mighty simple, indeed! [*Aside.*

Bid. One of them is a fine blustering man, and so called captain Flash; he's always talking of fighting and wars: he thinks he's sure of me; but I shall baulk him: we shall see him this afternoon, for he pressed strongly to come; and I have given him leave, while my aunt's taking her afternoon's nap.

Tag. And who is the other, pray?

Bid. Quite another sort of a man. He speaks like a lady for all the world, and never swears as Mr Flash does, but wears nice white gloves, and tells me what ribbons become my complexion, where to stick my patches, who is the best milliner, where they sell the best tea, and which is the best wash for the face, and the best paste for the hands; he is always playing with my fan, and shewing his teeth; and whenever I speak, he pats me—so—and cries, 'The devil 'take me, Miss Biddy, but you'll be my perdi-'tion!'—ha, ha, ha!

Tag. Oh, the pretty creature! And what do you call him, pray?

Bid. His name is Fribble: you shall see him, too; for, by mistake, I appointed them at the same time: but you must help me out with them.

Tag. And suppose your favourite should come too———

Bid. I should not care what became of the others.

Tag. What's his name?

Bid. It begins with an R—h—o——

Tag. I'll be hanged if it is not Rhodophil!

Bid. I am frightened at you! You're a witch, Tag.

Tag. I am so; and I can tell your fortune, too. Look me in the face. The gentleman you love most in the world, will be at our house this afternoon: he arrived from the army this morning, and dies till he sees you.

Bid. Is he come, Tag? Don't joke with me!

Tag. Not to keep you longer in suspence, you must know, the servant of your Strephon, by some unaccountable fate or other, is my lord and master: he has just been with me, told me of his master's arrival and impatience——

Bid. Oh, my dear, dear Tag, you have put me out of my wits—I am all over in a flutter. I shall leap out of my skin—I don't know what to do with myself! Is he come, Tag? I am ready to faint—I would give the world I had put on my pink and silver robings to-day.

Tag. I assure you, miss, you look charmingly.

Bid. Do I, indeed, though? I'll put a little patch under my left eye, and powder my hair immediately.

Tag. Well, go to dinner first, and then I'll assist you.

Bid. Dinner! I can't eat a morsel! I don't know what's the matter with me; my ears tingle, my heart beats, my face flushes, and I tremble every joint of me. I must run in and look at myself in the glass this moment.

Tag. Yes, she has it, and deeply too: This is no hypocrisy——

Not art, but nature, now, performs her part,
And every word's the language of the heart.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Continues.*

Enter CAPTAIN LOVEIT, BIDDY, TAG, *and* PUFF.

Capt. To find you still constant, and to arrive at such a critical juncture, is the height of fortune and happiness.

Bid. Nothing shall force me from you; and, if I am secure of your affections——

Puff. I'll be bound for him, madam, and give you any security you can ask.

Tag. Every thing goes on to our wish, sir. I just now had a second conference with my old lady; and she was so convinced by my arguments, that she returned instantly to the lawyer to forbid the drawing out of any writings at all: and she is determined never to thwart miss's inclinations, and left it to us to give the old gentleman his discharge at the next visit.

Capt. Shall I undertake the old dragon?

Tag. If we have occasion for help, we shall call for you.

Bid. I expect him every moment! therefore, I'll tell you what, Rhodophil, you and your man shall be locked up in my bed-chamber till we have settled matters with the old gentleman.

Capt. Do what you please with me.

Bid. You must not be impatient though.

Capt. I can undergo any thing with such a reward in view. One kiss, and I'll be quite resigned——And now, show me the way.

[*Exeunt.*

Tag. Come, sirrah, when I have got you under lock and key, I shall bring you to reason.

Puff. Are your wedding-clothes ready, my dove? The certificate is come.

Tag. Go, follow your captain, sirrah!—march. You may thank Heaven I had patience to stay so long.

[*Exeunt* TAG *and* PUFF.

Re-enter BIDDY.

Bid. I was very much alarmed for fear my two gallants should come in upon us unawares; we should have had sad work if they had. I find I love Rhodophil vastly; for, though my other sparks flatter me more, I can't abide the thoughts of them now—I have business upon my hands enough to turn my little head—but, egad, my heart's good, and a fig for dangers! Let me see—What shall I do with my two gallants? I must at least part with them decently. Suppose I set them together by the ears? The luckiest thought in the world! For, if they won't quarrel (as I believe they won't), I can break with them for cowards, and very justly dismiss them my service: and, if they will fight, and one of them be killed, the other will certainly be hanged, or run away; and so I shall very handsomely get rid of both. I am glad I have settled it so purely.

Enter TAG.

Well, Tag, are they safe?

Tag. I think so——the doors double locked, and I have the key in my pocket.

Bid. That's pure; but have you given them any thing to divert them?

Tag. I have given the captain one of your old gloves to mumble; but my Strephon is diverting himself with the more substantial comforts of a cold venison pasty.

Bid. What shall we do with the next that comes?

Tag. If Mr Fribble comes first, I'll clap him up into my lady's store-room. I suppose he is a great maker of marmalade himself, and will have an opportunity of making some critical remarks upon our pastry and sweetmeats.

Bid. When one of them comes, do you go and watch for the other; and as soon as you see him, run in to us, and pretend it is my aunt, and so we shall have an excuse to lock him up till we want him.

Tag. You may depend upon me. Here is one of them.

Enter FRIBBLE.

Bid. Mr Fribble, your servant——

Frib. Miss Biddy, your slave—I hope I have not come upon you abruptly? I should have waited upon you sooner; but an accident happened that discomposed me so, that I was obliged to go home again to take drops.

Bid. Indeed you don't look well, sir——Go, Tag, and do as I bid you.

Tag. I will, madam. [*Exit* TAG.

Bid. I have set my maid to watch my aunt, that we mayn't be surprised by her.

Frib. Your prudence is equal to your beauty, miss; and I hope your permitting me to kiss your hands, will be no impeachment to your understanding.

Bid. I hate the sight of him.—[*Aside.*]—I was afraid I should not have had the pleasure of seeing you. Pray, let me know what accident you met with, and what's the matter with your hand?—I shan't be easy till I know.

Frib. Well, I vow, Miss Biddy, you're a good *creeter*—I'll endeavour to muster up what little spirits I have, and tell you the whole affair.—Hem!—But first, you must give me leave to make you a present of a small pot of my lip-salve. My servant made it this morning: the ingredients are innocent, I assure you; nothing but the best virgin-wax, conserve of roses, and lily-of-the-valley water.

Bid. I thank you, sir; but my lips are generally red; and when they an't, I bite them.

Frib. I bite my own sometimes, to pout them a little; but this will give them a softness, colour, and an agreeable *moister*. Thus, let me make an humble offering at that shrine, where I have already sacrificed my heart.

[*Kneels, and gives the pot.*

Bid. Upon my word, that's very prettily expressed!! you are positively the best company in the world—I wish he was out of the house.

[*Aside.*

Frib. But to return to my accident, and the reason why my hand is in this condition—I beg you'll excuse the appearance of it, and be satisfied, that nothing but mere necessity could have forced me to appear thus muffled before you.

Bid. I am very willing to excuse any misfortune that happens to you, sir. [*Curtsies.*

Frib. You are vastly good, indeed—Thus it was—Hem! You must know, miss, there is not an animal in the creation I have so great an aversion to, as those hackney-coach fellows—As I was coming out of my lodgings, says one of them to me, Would your honour have a coach? No, man, said I, not now (with all the civility imaginable). I'll carry you and your doll too, said he, Miss Margery, for the same price—upon which the masculine beasts about us fell a laughing. Then I turned round in a great passion—Curse me, says I, fellow, but I'll trounce thee!—And as I was holding out my hand in a threatening *poster*—thus—he makes a cut at me with his whip, and striking me over the nail of my little finger, it gave me such exquisite *torter*, that I fainted away—and while I was in this condition, the mob picked my pocket of my purse, my scissars, my Morocco smelling-bottle, and my husswife.

Bid. I shall laugh in his face.—[*Aside.*]—I am afraid you are in great pain. Pray sit down, Mr Fribble: but I hope your hand is in no danger?

[*They sit.*

Frib. Not in the least, madam; pray, don't be apprehensive. A milk-poultice, and a gentle sweat to-night, with a little manna in the morning, I am confident will relieve me entirely.

Bid. But pray, Mr Fribble, do you make use of a husswife?

Frib. I can't do without it, madam: there is a club of us, all young bachelors, the sweetest society in the world; and we meet three times a week at each other's lodgings, where we drink tea, hear the chat of the day, invent fashions for the ladies, make models of them, and cut out patterns in paper. We were the first inventors of knotting; and this fringe is the original produce, and joint labour of our little community.

Bid. And who are your pretty set, pray?

Frib. There's Phil. Whiffle, Jacky Wagtail, my lord Trip, Billy Dimple, sir Dilberry Diddle, and your humble——

Bid. What a sweet collection of happy creatures!

Frib. Indeed and so we are miss—but a prodigious fracas disconcerted us some time ago at Billy Dimple's—three drunken naughty women of the town burst into our club-room, cursed us all, threw down the china, broke six looking-glasses, scalded us with the slop-bason, and scratched poor Phil. Whiffle's cheek in such a manner, that he has kept his bed these three weeks.

Bid. Indeed, Mr Fribble, I think all our sex have great reason to be angry; for if you are so happy, now you are bachelors, the ladies may wish and sigh to very little purpose.

Frib. You are mistaken, I assure you; I am prodigiously rallied about my passion for you, I can tell you that, and am looked upon as lost to our society already. He, he, he!

Bid. Pray, Mr Fribble, now you have gone so

far, don't think me impudent, if I long to know how you intend to use the lady who has been honoured with your affections?

Frib. Not as most other wives are used, I assure you: all the domestic business will be taken *off her* hands. I shall make the tea, comb the dogs, and dress the children myself; so that, though I'm a commoner, Mrs Fribble will lead the life of a woman of quality; for she will have nothing to do but lie in bed, play at cards, and scold the servants.

Bid. What a happy creature she must be!

Frib. Do you really think so? Then, pray, let me have a little *serous* talk with you——Though my passion is not of long standing, I hope the sincerity of my intentions———

Bid. Ha, ha, ha!

Frib. Go, you wild thing!—[*Pats her.*]—The devil take me, but there is no talking to you—How can you use me in this barbarous manner! If I had the constitution of an alderman, it would sink under my sufferings——*hooman nater* can't support it.

Bid. Why, what would you do with me, Mr Fribble?

Frib. Well, I vow I'll beat you if you talk so—don't look at me in that manner—flesh and blood can't bear it—I could—but I won't grow indecent———

Bid. But pray, sir, where are the verses you were to write upon me? I find, if a young lady depends too much upon such fine gentlemen as you, she'll certainly be disappointed.

Frib. I vow, the flutter I was put into this afternoon, has quite turned my senses—here they are, though—and I believe you'll like them.

Bid. There can be no doubt of it.

[*Curtsies.*

Frib. I protest, miss, I don't like that curtsy—Look at me, and always rise in this manner.—[*Shows her.*]—But, my dear *creeter*, who put on your cap to-day? They have made a fright of you, and it is as yellow as old lady Crowfoot's neck. When we are settled, I'll dress your head myself.

Bid. Pray read the verses to me, Mr Fribble.

Frib. I obey—Hem! William Fribble, esq. to Miss Biddy Bellair—greeting.

No ice so hard, so cold as I,
'Till warmed and softened by your eye;
And now my heart dissolves away,
In dreams by night, in sighs by day.
No brutal passion fires my breast,
Which loathes the object when possessed;
But one of harmless, gentle kind,
Whose joys are centered—in the mind:
Then take with me love's better part,
His downy wing, but not his dart.

How do you like them?

Bid. Ha, ha, ha! I swear they are very pretty—but I don't quite understand them.

Frib. These light pieces are never so well understood in reading as singing. I have set them myself, and will endeavour to give them you: La—la—I have an abominable cold, and can't sing a note; however, the tune's nothing, the manner's all.

No ice so hard, &c. [*Sings.*]

Enter TAG, *running.*

Tag. Oh, madam, madam!

Frib. What's the matter?

Tag. Your aunt, your aunt, your aunt, madam!

Bid. Oh! for Heaven's sake, hide Mr Fribble, or we are ruined! Put him into the store-room this moment.

Frib. Is it a damp place, Mrs Tag? The floor is boarded, I hope?

Tag. Indeed it is not, sir.

Frib. What shall I do? I shall certainly catch my death! Where's my cambric handkerchief, and my salts? I shall certainly have my hysterics. [*Runs in with* TAG.

Bid. In, in, in!—So, now let the other come as soon as he will! I do not care if I had twenty of them, so they would but come one after another.

Re-enter TAG.

Was my aunt coming?

Tag. No, 'twas Mr Flash, I suppose, by the length of his stride; and the cock of his hat. He'll be here this minute——What shall we do with him?

Bid. I'll manage him, I warrant you, and try his courage; be sure you are ready to second me—we shall have pure sport.

Tag. Hush! here he comes,

Enter FLASH, *singing.*

Flash. Well, my blossom, here am I! What hopes for a poor dog, eh?—How! the maid here? then I've lost the town, damme! Not a shilling to bribe the governor; she'll spring a mine, and I shall be blown to the devil!

Bid. Don't be ashamed, Mr Flash: I have told Tag the whole affair; and she's my friend, I can assure you.

Flash. Is she? then she won't be mine, I am certain. [*Aside.*] Well, Mrs Tag, you know, I suppose, what is to be done: this young lady and I have contracted ourselves; and so, if you please to stand bride-maid, why we'll fix the wedding-day directly.

Tag. The wedding-day, sir?

Flash. The wedding-day, sir! Ay, sir! the

wedding day, sir! What have you to say to that, sir?

Bid. My dear captain Flash, don't make such a noise; you'll wake my aunt.

Flash. And suppose I did, child, what then?

Bid. She'd be frightened out of her wits.

Flash. At me, miss? frightened at me? *Tout au contraire*, I assure you: you mistake the thing, child: I have some reason to believe I am not quite so shocking. [*Affectedly.*

Tag. Indeed, sir, you flatter yourself——But pray, sir, what are your pretensions?

Flash. The lady's promises, my own passion, and the best-mounted blade in the three kingdoms. If any man can produce a better title, let him take her. If not, the devil mince me if I give up an atom of her!

Bid. He's in a fine passion, if he would but hold it.

Tag. Pray, sir, hear reason a little.

Flash. I never do, madam; it is not my method of proceeding; here is my logic! [*Draws his sword.*] Sa, sa—my best argument is cart-over-arm, madam, ha, ha! [*Lounges*]; and if he answers that, madam, through my small guts, my breath, blood, and mistress, are all at his service ——nothing more, madam.

Bid. This'll do, this'll do!

Tag. But, sir, sir, sir!

Flash. But, madam, madam, madam! I profess blood, madam; I was bred up to it from a child; I study the book of fate, and the camp is my university. I have attended the lectures of prince Charles upon the Rhine, and Bathiani upon the Po, and have extracted knowledge from the mouth of a cannon. I'm not to be frightened with squibs, madam; no, no.

Bid. Pray, dear sir, don't mind her, but let me prevail with you to go away this time.—Your passion is very fine, to be sure; and when my aunt and Tag are gone out of the way, I'll let you know when I'd have you come again.

Flash. When you'd have me come again, child! And suppose I never would come again, what do you think of that now, ha? You pretend to be afraid of your aunt; your aunt knows what's what too well, to refuse a good match when 'tis offered——Look'e, miss, I'm a man of honour; glory is my aim; I have told you the road I am in; and do you see here, child? [*Showing his sword.*] no tricks upon travellers.

Bid. But pray, sir, hear me.

Flash. No, no, no; I know the world, madam: I am as well known at Covent-Garden as the Dial, madam: I'll break a lamp, bully a constable, bam a justice, or bilk a box-keeper, with any man in the liberties of Westminster: What do you think of me now, madam?

Bid. Pray, don't be so furious, sir.

Flash. Come, come, come; few words are best; somebody's happier than somebody, and I am a poor silly fellow, ha, ha——that's all——Look you, child, to be short (for I'm a man of reflection), I have but a bagatelle to say to you. I am in love with you up to hell and desperation; may the sky crush me if I am not!———But since there is another more fortunate than I, adieu, Biddy! Prosperity to the happy rival, patience to poor Flash; but the first time we meet——gunpowder be my perdition, but I'll have the honour to cut a throat with him. [*Going.*

Bid. [*Stopping him.*] You may meet with him now, if you please.

Flash. Now! may I?——Where is he? I'll sacrifice the villain! [*Aloud.*

Tag. Hush! he's but in the next room.

Flash. Is he? Ram me [*Low.*] into a mortar-piece but I'll have vengeance! my blood boils to be at him.—Don't be frightened, miss!

Bid. No, sir; I never was better pleased, I assure you.

Flash. I shall soon do his business.

Bid. As soon as you please; take your own time.

Tag. I'll fetch the gentleman to you immediately. [*Going.*

Flash. [*Stopping her.*] Stay, stay a little; what a passion I am in!—Are you sure he is in the next room?—I shall certainly tear him to pieces——I would fain murder him like a gentleman too—Besides, this family shan't be brought into trouble upon my account—I have it—I'll watch for him in the street, and mix his blood with the puddle of the next kennel. [*Going.*

Bid. [*Stopping him.*] No, pray, Mr Flash, let me see the battle; I shall be glad to see you fight for me; you shan't go, indeed.

[*Holding him.*

Tag. [*Holding him.*] Oh, pray let me see you fight: there were two gentleman *fit* yesterday, and my mistress was never so diverted in her life. —I'll fetch him out. [*Exit.*

Bid. Do, stick him, stick him, captain Flash; I shall love you the better for it.

Flash. Damn your love! I wish I was out of the house. [*Aside.*

Bid. Here he is——Now, speak some of your hard words, and run him through———

Flash. Don't be in fits now——

[*Aside to* BIDDY.

Bid. Never fear me!

Enter TAG *and* FRIBBLE.

Tag. [*To* FRIBBLE.] Take it on my word, sir, he is a bully, and nothing else.

Frib. [*Frightened.*] I know you are my good friend; but perhaps you don't know his disposition.

Tag. I am confident he is a coward.

Frib. D'ye think so, Mrs Tag?

Tag. Oh, I am sure of it.

Frib. Is he? Nay, then, I'm his man!

Flash. I like his looks, but I'll not venture too far at first.

Tag. Speak to him, sir.

Frib. I will—I understand, sir—hem—that you—by Mrs Tag here—sir—who has informed me—hem—that you would be glad to speak with me—demme— [*Turns off.*

Flash. I can speak to you, sir—or to any body, sir—or I can let it alone and hold my tongue—if I see occasion, sir, damme— [*Turns off.*

Bid. Well said, Mr Flash; be in a passion.

Tag. [*To* FRIBBLE.] Don't mind his looks, he changes colour already; to him, to him! [*Pushes him.*

Frib. Don't hurry me, Mrs Tag, for Heaven's sake: I shall be out of breath before I begin, if you do—sir—[*To* FLASH.] If you can't speak to a gentleman in another manner, sir—why, then, I'll venture to say, you had better hold your tongue—oons.

Flash. Sir, you and I are of different opinions.

Frib. You and your opinions may go to the devil—take that. [*Turns off to* TAG.

Tag. Well said, sir; the day's your own.

Bid. What's the matter, Mr Flash? Is all your fury gone! Do you give me up?

Frib. I have done his business. [*Struts about.*

Flash. Give you up, madam! No, madam, when I am determined in my resolutions, I am always calm; 'tis our way, madam: and now I shall proceed to business——Sir, I beg to say a word to you in private.

Frib. Keep your distance, fellow, and I'll answer you. That lady has confessed a passion for me; and, as she has delivered up her heart into my keeping, nothing but my 'art's blood shall purchase it. Damnation!

Tag. Bravo! bravo!

Flash. If those are the conditions, I'll give you earnest for it directly. [*Draws.*] Now, villain, renounce all right and title this minute, or the torrent of my rage will overflow my reason, and I shall annihilate the nothingness of your soul and body in an instant.

Frib. I wish there was a constable at hand to take us both up; we shall certainly do one another a prejudice.

Tag. No, you won't indeed, sir; pray, bear up to him; if you would but draw your sword, and be in a passion, he would run away directly.

Frib. Will he? [*Draws.*] Then I can no longer contain myself—Hell and the furies! Come on, thou savage brute!

Tag. Go on, sir!

[*Here they stand in fighting postures, while* BIDDY *and* TAG *push them forward.*

Flash. Come on, sir!

Bid. Go on.

Frib. Come on, rascal!

Tag. Go on, sir.

Enter CAPTAIN LOVEIT *and* PUFF.

Capt. What's the matter, gentlemen?

[*They both keep their fencing posture.*

Flash. Don't part us, sir!

Frib. No, pray sir, don't part us; we shall do you a mischief.

Capt. Puff, look to the other gentleman, and call a surgeon.

Bid. & Tag. Ha, ha, ha!

Puff. Bless me! how can you stand under your wounds, sir?

Frib. Am I hurt, sir?

Puff. Hurt, sir! why, you have—let me see—pray, stand in the light—one, two, three, through the heart! and, let me see—hum—eight through the small guts! Come, sir, make it up the round dozen, and then we'll part you.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Capt. Come here, Puff!

[*Whispers, and looks at* FLASH.

Puff. 'Tis the very same, sir.

Capt. [*To* FLASH.] Pray, sir, have I not had the pleasure of seeing you abroad?

Flash. I have served abroad.

Capt. Had not you the misfortune, sir, to be missing at the last engagement in Flanders?

Flash. I was found amongst the dead in the field of battle.

Puff. He was the first that fell, sir—the wind of a cannon-ball struck him flat upon his face: he had just strength enough to creep into a ditch; and there he was found after the battle in a most deplorable condition.

Capt. Pray, sir, what advancement did you get by the service of that day?

Flash. My wounds rendered me unfit for service, and I sold out.

Puff. Stole out, you mean——We hunted him by scent to the water-side; thence he took shipping for England; and taking the advantage of my master's absence, has attacked the citadel; which we are luckily come to relieve—and drive his honour into the ditch again.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Frib. He, he, he!

Capt. And now, sir, how have you dared to show your face in open day, or wear even the outside of a profession you have so much scandalized by your behaviour?——I honour the name of a soldier; and, as a party concerned, am bound not to see it disgraced. As you have forfeited your title to honour, deliver up your sword this instant.

Flash. Nay, good captain——

Capt. No words, sir. [*Takes his sword.*

Frib. He's a sad scoundrel——I wish I had kicked him.

Capt. The next thing I command—Leave this house, change the colour of your clothes, and fierceness of your looks; appear from top to toe the wretch, the very wretch thou art: If e'er I meet thee in the military dress again, or if you put on looks that bely the native baseness of thy heart, be it where it will, this shall be the reward of thy impudence and disobedience.

[*Kicks him; he runs off.*

Frib. What an infamous rascal it is!—I thank you, sir, for this favour; but I must after, and cane him. [*Going, is stopt by the* CAPTAIN.

Capt. One word with you too, sir.

Frib. With me, sir!

Capt. You need not tremble; I shan't use you roughly.

Frib. I am certain of that, sir; but I am sadly troubled with weak nerves.

Capt. Thou art of a species too despicable for correction; therefore be gone; and if I see you here again, your insignificancy shan't protect you.

Frib. I am obliged to you for your kindness. Well, if ever I have any thing to do with intrigues again——Miss Biddy, your servant—Captain, your servant—Mrs Tag, yours—Old soldier, yours!

Puff. Boh!

[*In* FRIBBLE'S *face, as he is going out.*

Frib. O Lard! [*Exit.*

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Puff. Shall I ease you of your trophy, sir?

Capt. Take it, Puff, as a small recompense for thy fidelity; thou can'st better use it than its owner.

Puff. I wish your honour had a patent to take such trifles from every pretty gentleman that could spare them. I would set up the largest cutler's shop in the kingdom.

Capt. Well said, Puff!

Bid. But, pray, Mr Fox, how did you get out of your hole? I thought you was locked in.

Capt. I shot the bolt back when I heard a noise—and thinking you was in danger, I broke my confinement without any other consideration than your safety. [*Kisses her hand.*

Sir Sim. [*Without.*] Biddy, Biddy!——Why, Tag, Tag!

Bid. There's the old gentleman; run in, run in!

[*Exeunt* CAPTAIN *and* PUFF. TAG *opens the door.*

Enter SIR SIMON *and* JASPER.

Sir Sim. Where have you been, Biddy?—Jasper and I have knocked and called as loud and as long as we were able. What were you doing, child?

Bid. I was reading part of a play to Tag, and we came as soon as we heard you.

Sir Sim. What play, Moppet?

Tag. The Old Batchelor; and we were just got to old Nykyn, as you knocked at the door.

Sir Sim. I must have you burn your plays and romances, now you are mine—they corrupt your innocence; and what can you learn from them?

Bid. What you can't teach me, I am sure.

Sir Sim. Fy, fy, child! I never heard you talk at this rate before. I'm afraid, Tag, you put these things into her head.

Tag. I, sir!—I vow, sir Simon, she knows more than you can conceive. She surprises me, I assure you, though I have been married these two years, and lived with bachelors most part of my life.

Sir Sim. Do you hear, Jasper? I'm all over in a sweat.——Pray, miss, have you not had company this afternoon? I saw a young fop go out of the house as I was coming hither.

Bid. You might have seen two, sir Simon, if your eyes had been good.

Sir Sim. Do you hear, Jasper?——Sure the child is possessed——Pray, miss, what do they want here?

Bid. Me, sir; they wanted me.

Sir Sim. What did they want with you, I say?

Bid. Why, what do you want with me?

Sir Sim. Do you hear, Jasper?—I am thunderstruck!—I can't believe my own ears——Tell me the reason, I say, why——

Tag. I'll tell you the reason why, if you please, sir Simon. Miss, you know, is a very silly young girl; and, having found out (Heaven knows how!) that there is some little difference between sixty-five and twenty-five, she's ridiculous enough to chuse the latter; when, if she'd take my advice——

Sir Sim. You are right, Tag; she would take me—eh?——

Tag. Yes, sir, as the only way to have both; for, if she marries you, the other will follow of course.

Sir Sim. Do you hear, Jasper?

Bid. 'Tis very true, sir Simon: from knowing no better, I have set my heart upon a young man; and a young one I'll have. There has been three here this afternoon.

Sir Sim. Three, Jasper!

Bid. And they have been quarrelling about me, and one has beat the other two. Now, sir Simon, if you'll take up the conqueror, and kick him, as he has kicked the others, you shall have me for your reward, and my fifteen thousand pounds into the bargain. What says my hero, eh? [*Slaps him on the back.*

Sir Sim. The world's at an end——What's to be done, Jasper?

Jas. Pack up, and be gone. Don't fight the match, sir.

Sir Sim. Flesh and blood can't bear it—I'm all over agitation—Hugh, hugh!—Am I cheated by a baby, a doll? Where's your aunt, you young cockatrice?—I'll let her know—she's a base woman, and you are—

Bid. You are in a fine humour to show your valour. Tag, fetch the captain this minute, while sir Simon is warm, and let him know he is waiting here to cut his throat. [*Exit* TAG.] I locked him up in my bed-chamber till you came.

Sir Sim. Here's an imp of darkness!—What would I give, that my son Bob were here to thrash her spark, while I—ravished the rest of the family.

Jas. I believe we had best retire, sir.

Sir Sim. No, no, I must see her bully first: and, do you hear, Jasper? if I put him in a passion, do you knock him down.

Jas. Pray, keep your temper, sir.

Enter CAPTAIN TAG *and* PUFF.

Capt. [*Approaching angrily.*] What is the meaning, sir—'Ounds! it is my father, Puff! what shall I do? [*Aside.*

Puff. [*Drawing him by the coat.*] Kneel again, sir.

Sir Sim. I am enchanted! [*Starting.*

Capt. There is no retreat; I must stand it!

Bid. What's all this?

Sir Sim. Your humble servant, captain Fireball. You are welcome from the wars, noble captain—I did not think of being knocked on the head, or cut up alive, by so fine a gentleman.

Capt. I am under such confusion, sir, that I have not power to convince you of my innocence.

Sir Sim. Innocence! pretty lamb! And so, sir, you have left the regiment, and the honourable employment of fighting for your country, to come home and cut your father's throat? Why, you'll be a great man in time, Bob!

Bid. His father, Tag!

Sir Sim. Come, come! 'tis soon done—one stroke does it—or if you have any qualms, let your squire, there, perform the operation.

Puff. Pray, sir, don't throw such temptations in my way!

Capt. Hold your impudent tongue!

Sir Sim. Why don't you speak, Mr Modesty? what excuse have you for leaving the army, I say?

Capt. My affection to this lady.

Sir Sim. Your affection, puppy!

Capt. Our love, sir, has been long and mutual. What accidents have happened since my going abroad, and her leaving the country, and how I have most unaccountably met you here, I am a stranger to; but whatever appearances may be, I still am, and ever was, your dutiful son.

Bid. He talks like an angel, Tag!

Sir Sim. Dutiful, sirrah!—have not you rivalled your father?

Capt. No, sir, you have rivalled me. My claim must be prior to yours.

Bid. Indeed, sir Simon, he can show the best title to me.

Jas. Sir, sir, the young gentleman speaks well; and as the fortune will not go out of the family, I should advise you to drop your resentment, be reconciled to your son, and relinquish the lady.

Sir Sim. Ay, ay, with all my heart—Look ye, son, I give you the girl; she's too much for me, I confess;—and, take my word, you'll catch a Tartar.

Bid. I assure you, sir Simon, I'm not the person you take me for. If I have used you any ways ill, 'twas for your son's sake, who had my promise and inclinations before you: and though I believe I should have made you a most uncomfortable wife, I'll be the best daughter to you in the world; and if you stand in need of a lady, my aunt is disengaged, and is the best nurse—

Sir Sim. No, no, I thank you, child; you have so turned my stomach to marriage, I have no appetite left.——But where is this aunt? Won't she stop your proceedings, think you?

Tag. She's now at her lawyer's, sir; and if you please to go with the young couple, and give your approbation, I'll answer for my old lady's consent.

Bid. The captain and I, sir——

Sir Sim. Come, come, Bob, you are but an ensign; don't impose on the girl neither.

Capt. I had the good fortune, sir, to please my royal general by my behaviour in a small action with the enemy, and he gave me a company.

Sir Sim. Bob, I wish you joy! This is news indeed! And when we celebrate your wedding, son, I'll drink a half-pint bumper myself to your benefactor.

Capt. And he deserves it, sir. Such a general, by his example and justice, animates us to deeds of glory, and insures us conquest.

Sir Sim. Right, my boy——Come along, then. [*Going.*

Puff. Halt a little, gentlemen and ladies, if you please. Every body here seems well satisfied but myself.

Capt. What's the matter, Puff?

Puff. Sir, as I would make myself worthy of such a master, and the name of a soldier, I cannot put up with the least injury to my honour.

Sir Sim. Heyday! what flourishes are these?

Puff. Here is the man; come forth, caitiff.—[*To* JASPER.]—He hath confessed this day, that in my absence he hath taken freedom with my lawful wife, and had dishonourable intentions against my bed; for which I demand satisfaction.—

Sir Sim. [*Striking him.*] What stuff is here! The fellow's brain's turned!

Puff. And cracked too, sir; but you are my master's father, and I submit.

Capt. Come, come, I'll settle your punctilios, and will take care of you and Tag hereafter, provided you drop all animosities, and shake hands this moment.

Puff. My revenge gives way to my interest; and I once again, Jasper, take thee to my bosom.

Jas. I'm your friend again, Puff—But, hark ye—I fear you not; and if you'll lay aside your steel there, as far as a broken head or a black eye, I'm at your service upon demand.

Tag. You are very good at crowing, indeed, Mr Jasper; but let me tell you, the fool, that is rogue enough to brag of a woman's favours, must be a dunghill every way.——As for you, my

dear husband, shew your manhood in a proper place, and you need not fear these sheep-biters.

Sir Sim. The abigail is pleasant, I confess—he, he!

Bid. I'm afraid the town will be ill-natured enough to think I have been a little coquettish in my behaviour; but I hope, as I have been constant to the captain, I shall be excused diverting myself with pretenders.

Ladies! to fops and braggarts ne'er be kind;
No charms can warm them, and no virtues bind:
Each lover's merit by his conduct prove;
Who fails in honour, will be false in love.

[*Exeunt.*

TASTE.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

CARMINE, PUFF, BRUSH, } *quacks in painting.*
NOVICE, LORD DUPE, } *ignorant pretenders.*

ALDERMAN PENTWEAZEL, *a city cull.*
CALEB, *a cub, his son.*
BOY, *servant to* CARMINE.

WOMEN.

LADY PENTWEAZEL, *the alderman's spouse.*

Scene—A painting room.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter CARMINE, *followed by the Boy.*

Car. LAY these colours in the window, by the pallet. Any visitors, or messages?

Boy. 'Squire Felltree has been here, and insists upon Miss Racket's pictures being immediately finished and carried home—As to his wife and children, he says, you may take your own time.

Car. Well—

Boy. Here has been a messege too from my lady Pen——I can't remember her name, but 'tis upon the slate. She desires to know if you will be at home about noon.

Car. Fetch it. [*Exit Boy.*] Was the whole of our profession confined to the mere business of it, the employment would be pleasing as well as profitable; but, as matters are now managed, the art is the last thing to be regarded. Family connections, private recommendations, and an easy, genteel method of flattering, is to supply the delicacy of a Guido, the colouring of a Rubens, and the design of a Raphael——all their qualities centering in one man, without the first requisite, would be useless; and, with these, not one of them is necessary.

Enter Boy, with the slate.

Car. Let's see——Oh! lady Pentweazel from Blow-bladder-street——Admit her, by all means; and if Puff or Varnish should come, I am at home. [*Exit Boy.*] Lady Pentweazel! ha, ha! Now, here's a proof, that avarice is not the only or last passion old age is subject to.——This superannuated beldame gapes for flattery, like a nest of unfledged crows for food; and with them, too, gulps down every thing that's offered her—no matter how coarse. Well, she shall be fed; I'll make her my introductory key to the whole bench of aldermen.

Enter Boy with PUFF.

Boy. Mr Puff, sir.

Car. Let us be private. What have you there?

Puff. Two of Rembrandt's etching, by Scrape in May's Buildings: a paltry affair; a poor ten-guinea job; however a small game——you know

the proverb———What became of you yesterday?

Car. I was detained by sir Positive Bubble. How went the pictures? The Guido, what did that fetch?

Puff. One hundred and thirty.

Car. Hum! Four guineas for the frame, three the painting; then, we divide just one hundred and twenty-three.

Puff. Hold—not altogether so fast——Varnish had two pieces for bidding against Squander, and Brush five for bringing sir Tawdry Trifle.

Car. Mighty well! Look ye, Mr Puff, if these people are eternally quartered upon us, I declare off, sir; they eat up the profit. There's that damned Brush—but you'll find him out. I have, upon his old plan, given him copies of all the work I executed upon his recommendation; and what was the consequence? He clandestinely sold the copies, and I have all the originals in my lumber-room.

Puff. Come, come, Carmine; you are no great loser by that. Ah! that lumber-room! that lumber-room out of repair, is the best conditioned estate in the county of Middlesex. Why, now, there's your Susannah, it could not have produced you above twenty at most; and, by the addition of your lumber-room, dirt, and the salutary application of the aspaltham-pot, it became a Guido, worth a hundred and thirty pounds.—Besides, in all traffic of this kind, there must be combinations. Varnish and Brush are our jackals, and it is but fair they should partake of the prey. Courage, my boy! never fear. Praise be to folly and fashion, there are in this town dupes enough to gratify the avarice of us all.

Car. Mr Puff, you are ignorant, and scurrilous, and very impertinent, Mr Puff; and Mr Puff, I have a strange mind to leave you to yourselves, and then see what a hand you would make of it. Sir, if I do now and then add some tints of antiquity to my pictures, I do it in condescension to the foible of the world; for, sir, age, age, sir, is all my pictures want to render them as good pieces as the masters from whom they are taken; and let me tell you, sir, he that took my Susannah for a Guido, gave no mighty proofs of his ignorence, Mr Puff.

Puff. Why, thou post-painter, thou dauber, thou execrable white-washer, thou—have you so soon forgot the wretched state from whence I dragged you? The first time I set eyes on you, what was your occupation, then? Scribbling, in scarce legible letters, Coffee, tea, and chocolate, on a bawdy-house window in Goodman's-fields.

Car. The meanness of my original demonstrates the greatness of my genius.

Puff. Genius! Here is a dog! Pray, how high did your genius soar? To the daubing diabolical angels for ale-houses, dogs with chains for tanners' yards, rounds of beef and roasted pigs for Porridge island.

Car. Hannibal Scratchi did the same.

Puff. From that contemptible state did not I raise you to the Cat and Fiddle in Petticoat-lane; the Goose and Gridiron in Paul's Church-yard; the first *live* things you ever drew, dog?

Car. Pox take your memory! Well, but, Mr Puff—you are so———

Puff. Nor did I quit you, then: Who, sirrah, recommended you to Prim Stiff the mercer upon Ludgate-hill; how came you to draw the queen there? [*Loud knocks at the door.*

Car. Mr Puff, for Heaven's sake! Dear sir, you are so warm, we shall be blown———

Enter BOY.

Boy. Sir, my lady Pen——

Car. Send her to the—Show her up stairs. Dear Puff———

Puff. Oh, sir! I can be calm; I only wanted to let you see I had not forgot, though, perhaps, you may.

Car. Sir, you are very obliging. Well, but now, as all is over, if you will retreat a small time—Lady Pentweazel sits for her picture, and she's———

Puff. I have some business at next door; I suppose in half an hour's time——

Car. I shall be at leisure. Dear Puff——

Puff. Dear Carmine—— [*Exit* PUFF.

Car. Son of a whore! Boy, show the lady up stairs.

Enter LADY PENTWEAZEL.

Lady Pent. Fine pieces! very likely pieces! And, indeed, all alike. Hum! Lady Fussock—and, ha, ha, ha! Lady Glumstead, by all that's ugly———Pray, now, Mr Carmine, how do you limners contrive to overlook the ugliness, and yet preserve the likeness?

Car. The art, madam, may be conveyed in two words: where nature has been severe, we soften; where she has been kind, we aggravate.

Lady Pent. Very ingenus, and very kind, truly. Well, good sir, I bring you a subject that will demand the whole of the first part of your skill; and, if you are at leisure, you may begin directly.

Car Your ladyship is here a little ungrateful to nature, and cruel to yourself; even lady Pentweazel's enemies (if such there be) must allow that she is a fine woman.

Lady Pent. Oh, your servant, good sir! Why, I have had my day, Mr Carmine; I have had my day.

Car. And have still, madam. The only difference I shall make between what you were, and what you are, will be no more than what Rubens has distinguished between Mary de Medicis, a virgin, and a regent.

Lady Pent. Mr Carmine, I vow you are a very judicious person; I was always said to be like that family. When my piece was first done, the limner did me after Venus de Medicis, which, I suppose, might be one of Mary's sisters: but things must change; to be sitting for my picture at this time of day—ha, ha, ha! But my daughter, Sukey, you must know, is just married to Mr Deputy Dripping, of Candlewick-ward, and would not be said nay; so it is not so much for the beauty, as the similitude.—Ha, ha, ha!

Car. True, madam: ha, ha, ha! But if I hit the likeness, I must preserve the beauty. Will your ladyship be seated? [*She sits.*

Lady Pent. I have heard, good sir, that every body has a more betterer and more worserer side of the face than the other—now, which will you choose?

Car. The right-side, madam—the left—now, if you please, the full——Your ladyship's countenance is so exactly proportioned, that I must have it all; no feature can be spared.

Lady Pent. When you come to the eyes, Mr Carmine, let me know, that I may call up a look.

Car. Mighty well, madam! your face a little nearer to the left, nearer me—your head more up—shoulders back—and chest forward.

Lady Pent. Bless me, Mr Carmine, don't mind my shape this bout; for I am only in jumps. Shall I send for my tabbies?

Car. No, madam, we'll supply that for the present—Your ladyship was just now mentioning a daughter—Is she—your face a little more towards me—Is she the sole inheritor of her mother's beauty? Or—have you———

Lady Pent. That? ha, ha, ha! Why, that is my youngest of all, except Caleb. I have had, Mr Carmine, five-born and christened—stay—don't let me lie now—One—two—three—four—five——In short, I have had twenty as fine babes as ever trode in shoe of leather.

Car. Upon my word, madam, your ladyship is an admirable member of the commonwealth;—'tis a thousand pities that, like the Romans, we have not some honours to reward such distinguished merit.

Lady Pent. Ay, ay, Mr Carmine, if breeding amongst Christians was as much encouraged as amongst dogs and horses, we need not be making laws to let in a parcel of outlandish locusts to eat us all up.

Car. I am told, madam, that a bill for some such purpose is about to pass. Now, madam, I am come to the eyes—Oh, that look, that, that I must despair of imitating!

Lady Pent. Oh, oh, good sir! Have you found out that? Why, all my family by the mother's side were famous for their eyes: I have a great aunt among the beauties at Windsor; she has a sister at Hampton-court, a perdigious fine woman—she had but one eye, indeed, but that was a piercer; that one eye got her three husbands—we were called the gimlet-eyed family. Oh, Mr Carmine, you need not mind these heats in my face; they always discharge themselves about Christmas—my true carnation is not seen in my countenance. That's carnation! Here's your flesh and blood.

[*Shewing her arm.*

Car. Delicate, indeed! finely turned, and of a charming colour!

Lady Pent. And yet it has been employed enough to spoil the best hand and arm in the world———Even before marriage never idle; none of your galloping, gossiping, Ranelagh romps, like the forward minxes of the present age. I was always employed either in painting your lamskips, playing upon the haspicols, making paste, or something or other—All our family had a geno; and then I sung! Every body said I had a monstrous fine voice for music.

Car. That may be discerned by your ladyship's tones in conversation.

Lady Pent. Tones! You are right, Mr Carmine; that was Mr Purcell's word. Miss Molly Griskin, says he (my maiden name), you have tones.

Car. As your ladyship has preserved every thing else so well, I dare swear you have not lost your voice. Will you favour me with an air?

Lady Pent. Oh, sir! you are so polite, that it's impossible——But I have none of your new play-house songs——I can give you one that was made on myself by Laurence Lutestring, a neighbour's son.

Car. What you please, madam.

Lady Pent. [*Sings.*]

As I was walking by the side of a river,
I met a young damsel so charming and clever;
Her voice to please it could not fail,
She sung like any nightingale,
Fal, de, rol! hugh, hugh, &c.

Bless me! I have such a cough; but there are tones.

Car. Inimitable ones.

Lady Pent. But, Mr Carmine, you limners are all ingenus men—you sing?

Car. A ballad, or so, madam; music is a sister art; and it would be a little unnatural not to cultivate an acquaintance there.

Lady Pent. Why, truly, we ought not to be ashamed of our relations, unless they are poor;—and then, you know——

Enter BOY.

Boy. Alderman Pentweazel, and Mr Puff.

Lady Pent. Oh, he was to call upon me; we go to the auction. Desire him to walk up—Mr Pentweazel, you must know, went this morning

to meet Caleb, my youngest boy, at the Bull and Gate. The child has been two years and three quarters at school, with Dr Jerk, near Doncaster, and comes to-day by the York waggon: for it has always been my maxum, Mr Carmine, to give my children learning enough; for, as the old saying is,

When house and land are gone and spent,
Then learning is most excellent.

Car. Your ladyship is quite right. Too much money cannot be employed in so material an article.

Lady Pent. Nay, the cost is but small; but poor ten pounds a-year, for head, back, books, bed, and belly; and they say the children are all wonderful Latiners, and come up—lack-a-day! they come up as fat as pigs. Oh! here they are——odds me! he's a thumper. You see, Mr Carmine, I breed no starvelings—Come hither, child. Mind your haviours. Where's your best bow? Turn out your toes. One would think he had learnt to dance of his father. I am sure my family were none so awkward. There was my brother George, a perfect picture of a man: he danced, lud! But come, all in good time—Hold up thy head, Caleb.

Ald. Prithee, sweet honey, let the child alone. His master says he comes on wonderful in his learning; and, as to your bows and your congees, never fear, he'll learn them fast enough at home.

Lady Pent. Lack-a-day! Well said—we now—if he does, I know who must teach him. Well, child, and dost remember me? Hey? Who am I?

Caleb. Anan?

Lady Pent. Dost know me?

Caleb. Yes; you be mother.

Lady Pent. Nay, the boy had always a good memory. And what hast learnt, Caleb, hey?

Caleb. I be got into Æsop's Fables, and can say all *As in presenti* by heart.

Lady Pent. Upon my word—that's more than ever thy father could.

Ald. Nay, nay, no time has been lost; I questioned the lad as we came along; I asked him himself——

Lady Pent. Well, well; speak when you are spoken to, Mr Alderman. How often must I—Well, Caleb, and hadst a good deal of company in the waggon, boy?

Caleb. O la! Powers of company, mother.—There was lord Gorman's fat cook, a blackamore drumming-man, two actor people, a recruiting serjeant, a monkey and I.

Lady Pent. Upon my word, a pretty parcel!

Caleb. Yes, indeed; but the——the fat cook got drunk at Coventry, and so fell out at the tail of the waggon; so we left she behind. The next day the serjeant ran away with the showman's wife; the t'other two went after; so only the monkey and I came to town together.

Car. Upon my word, the young gentleman gives a good account of his travels!

Lady Pent. Ay, ay, Mr Carmine, he's all over the blood of the Griskins. I warrant the child will make his way. Go, Caleb, go and look at them pretty paintings—Now, Mr Carmine, let us see if my goodman can find me out.

Ald. Lack-a-day! Well, I profess they are all so handsome, that I am puzzled to know which is thine, chuck.

Puff. I am surprized at your want of discernment, Mr Alderman; but the possession of a jewel destroys its value with the wearer: now, to me, it seems impossible to err; and though Mr Carmine is generally successful, in this instance he is particularly happy. Where can you meet with that mixture of fire and softness, but in the eyes of lady Pentweazel?

Lady Pent. Oh, sir!

Puff. That clearness and delicacy of complexion, with that flow of ruddiness and health?

Lady Pent. Sir! Sir! Sir!

Puff. That fall of shoulders, turn of neck, set on head, full chest, taper waist, plump——

Lady Pent. Spare me, sweet sir! You see, Mr Pentweazel, other people can find out my charms, though you overlook them—Well, I profess, sir, you are a gentleman of great discernment: and, if business should bring you into the city—for, alas! what pleasure can bring a man of your refined taste there?

Puff. Oh, madam!

Lady Pent. I say, sir, if such an accident should happen, and Blowbladder-street has any charms—

Puff. Oh! Madam! Madam! Madam! Madam!——

Lady Pent. It is not impossible but we may receive you, though not equal to your merits—

Puff. Madam!

Lady Pent. Yet in such a manner as to show our sense of them. Sir, I'm your very obedient.

Puff. Your ladyship's most——

Lady Pent. Not a step.

Puff. Madam——

Lady Pent. Sir—Mr Alderman, your bow to the gentleman. The very finest——,

Puff. Madam!

Lady Pent. Sir, your most obedient.

Puff. Your devoted.

[*Exeunt Ald. and Wife.*

Car. Ha, ha! Well said, Puff! What a calamity hast thou drawn upon the knight! Thou hast so tickled the vanity of the harradan, that the poor helpmate will experience a double portion of her contempt.

Puff. Rot them! But to our business. The auction is about beginning; and I have promised

to meet Mr David Dusledorpe, sir Positive Bubble, and lord Dupe, to examine the pictures, and fix on those for which they are to bid—but since, we have settled the German plan; so Varnish or Brush must attend them.

Car. Oh! By all means pursue that. You have no conception how dear the foreign accent is to your true virtuoso; it announces taste, knowledge, veracity, and in short every thing—But can you enough disguise the turn of your face, and tone of your voice? A discovery of Mr Puff, in Mynheer Groningen, blasts us at once.

Puff. Never fear me. I wish you may have equal success in the part of Canto.

Car. Pho! Mine's a trifle. A man must have very slender abilities indeed, who can't, for ten minutes, imitate a language and deportment that he has been witness to for ten years.

Puff. But you must get their tones, their tones; 'tis easy enough. Come, hand up here that there Corregio; an inimitable piece, gentlemen and ladies: the very best work of the best master; subject agreeable, highly finished, and well preserved; a seat for the ladies; hand it to sir Positive; a-going for fifty: speak, or it is going for fifty; joy to your ladyship: come, the next. But remember, let your bob be bushy, and your bow low.

Car. Enough, enough; we are strangers to each other, you know.

Puff. Absolute. Oh! but what pictures of yours are in the sale?

Car. There's my holy family, by Raphael; the marriage in Cana, by Reuben Rouge; Tom Jackson's Teniers; and for busts, Taylor's head without a nose from Herculaneum.

Puff. Are the antique seals come home?

Car. No; but they will be finished by next week.

Puff. You must take care of Novice's collection of medals—he'll want them by the end of the month.

Car. The coins of the first emperors are now steeping in copperas; and I have an Otho, a Galba, a Nero, and two Domitians, reeking from the dunghill. The rest we can have from Dr Mummy; a never-failing chap, you know.

Puff. Adieu! [*Exit.*

Car. Yours, sir—a troublesome fellow, this—confounded memory—useful, though—rounds of beef and roasted pigs!—Must get rid of him—ay; but when? Why, when—when I have gained my point. But how, how then? Oh, then it does not signify twopence. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Auction room.*

Enter PUFF, *as* MONSIEUR BARON DE GRONINGEN, CARMINE *as* CANTO, *and* BRUSH.

Car. COME, bustle, bustle. Brush, you introduce Puff. Puff, how are you in your German?

Puff. I canno speak for Englandt, but I can mak understand very mightily. Will that do?

Brush. To a hair. Remember you are come hither to purchase pictures for the elector of Bavaria. Carmine, you must clap lord Dupe's coat of arms on that half-length of Erasmus. I have sold it him as his great-grandfather's third brother for fifty guineas.

Car. It shall be done—Be it my province to establish the baron's reputation as a connoisseur. Brush has seen you abroad at the court of the reigning prince of Blantin.

Puff. Yes; I was do business mightily for prince Blantin,

Brush. Your portraits go first, Carmine. Novice, sir Positive Bubble, Jack Squander, lord Dupe, and Mordecai Lazarus the Jew-broker, have appointed me to examine with them the history-pieces. Which are most likely to stick?

Car. Here's a list.

Brush. Hush! hide the Erasmus; I hear the company on the stairs.

[*Exit* CARMINE. *And re-enters anon.*

Enter LORD DUPE, BUBBLE, SQUANDER, *&c.*

Lord Dupe. Mr Brush, I am your devoted servant. You have procured my ancestor?

Brush. It is in my possession, my lord; and I have the honour to assure your lordship that the family features are very discernible; and, allowing for the difference of dress, there's a strong likeness between you and your predecessor.

Lord Dupe. Sir, you have obliged me. All these you have marked in the catalogue are originals?

Brush. Undoubted. But, my lord, you need not depend solely on my judgment: here's Mynheer Baron de Groningen, who is come hither to survey, and purchase for the elector of Bavaria; an indisputable connoisseur: his bidding will be a direction for your lordship. 'Tis a thousand pities that any of these masters should quit England. They were conducted hither at an immense expence; and if they now leave us, what will it be but a public declaration, that all taste and liberal knowledge is vanished from amongst us?

Lord Dupe. Sir, leave the support of the national credit to my care. Could you introduce me to Mynheer? Does he speak English?

Brush. Not fluently; but so as to be understood. Mynheer, lord Dupe——the patron of arts, the Petronius for taste, and for well-timed generosity

the Leo—and the Mæcenas of the present age, desires to know you.

Puff. Sir, you honour me very mightily. I was hear of lord Dupes in Hollandt. I was tell he was one delatant, one curieuse, one pricieuse of his country.

Lord Dupe. The Dutch are an obliging, civilized, well-bred kind of people. But pray, sir, what occasions us the honour of a visit from you?

Puff. I was come to bid for paints for de elector of Bavaria.

Lord Dupe. Are there any here that deserve your attention?

Puff. O, dare are good pieces; but dare is one I likes mightily; de off-sky, and home track is fine, and de maister is in it.

Lord Dupe. What is the subject?

Puff. Dat I know not; vat I minds, vat you call de draws and de colours.

Lord Dupe. Mr Canto, what is the subject?

Car. It is, my lord, St Anthony of Padua exorcising the devil out of a ram-cat: it has a companion somewhere—oh, here! which is the same saint in a wilderness, reading his breviary by the light of a glow-worm.

Brush. Invaluable pictures both! And will match your lordship's corregio in the saloon.

Lord Dupe. I'll have them. What pictures are those, Mr Canto?

Car. They are not in the sale; but I fancy I could procure them for your lordship.

Lord Dupe. This I presume, might have been a landskip; but the water, and the men, and the trees, and the dogs, and the ducks, and the pigs, they are all obliterated, all gone.

Brush. An indisputable mark of its antiquity; its very merit; besides, a little varnish will fetch the figures again.

Lord Dupe. Set it down for me——The next.

Car. That is a Moses in the bulrushes. The blended joy and grief in the figure of the sister in the corner, the distress and anxiety of the mother here, and the beauty and benevolence of Pharaoh's daughter, are circumstances happily imagined, and boldly expressed.

Brush. Lack-a-day! 'tis but a modern performance; the master is alive, and an Englishman.

Lord Dupe. Oh, then I would not give it house room.

Puff. Here is a pretty piece I find stick up here in de corner: I was see in Hollandt, at Loo, a piece mighty like; there was little mices, that was nibble, nibble, nibble, upon vat you call frumage, and little shurels all vit brush tails ran up de trees; and there was great things vat you call—psha, that have long bearts, and cry *Ba.*

Brush. What! goats?

Puff. Ay, dat was de name.

Lord Dupe. I should think, by the cheese and the goats, Mynheer, yours was a Welsh piece, instead of a Dutch.

Puf. Ah, 'twas good piece. I wish to my heart lord Dupes was have that piece.

Enter NOVICE.

Nov. Where's Mr Brush? My dear Brush, am I too late?

Brush. In pretty good time.

Nov. May I lose my Otho, or be tumbled from my phaeton the first time I jehup my sorrels, if I have not made more haste than a young surgeon to his first labour! But the lots, the lots, my dear Brush, what are they? I'm upon the rack of impatience till I see them, and in a fever of desire till I possess them.

Brush. Mr Canto, the gentleman would be glad to see the busts, medals, and precious relics, of Greece and ancient Rome.

Car. Perhaps, sir, we may show him something of greater antiquity—Bring them forward ——The first lot consists of a hand without an arm, the first joint of the forefinger gone, supposed to be a limb of the Apollo Delphos——The second half a foot, with the toes entire, of the Juno Lucina——The third, the Caduceus of the Mercurius Infernalis———The fourth, the half of a leg of the infant Hercules———All indisputable antiques, and of the Memphian marble.

Puff. Let me see Juno's half-foot. All the toes entire?

Car. All.

Puff. Here is a little swelt by this toe, dat looks bad proportion.

All. Hey, hey!

Puff. What's dat?

Car. That! Psha! that! Why, that's only a corn.

All. Oh!

Puff. Corn! dat was extreme natural; dat is fine; de maister is in it.

All. Very fine; invaluable!

Puff. Where is de Hercules' calf? Upon my word 'tis a very large calf; big, big, big, all de way up, all de way down.

Lord Dupe. I believe this Hercules was an Irishman.

Nov. But where are your busts? Here, here, gentlemen, here's a curiosity! a medal of Oriuna; got for me by doctor Mummy; the only one in the visible world; there may be some under ground.

Lord Dupe. Fine indeed! Will you permit me to taste it! It has the relish. [*All taste.*

Nov. The relish! Zooks, it cost me a hundred guineas.

Puff. By gar, it is a dear bit, though.

Nov So you may think; but three times the money should not purchase it.

Lord Dupe. Pray, sir, whose bust is it that dignifies this coin?

Nov. The empress Oriuna, my lord.

Lord Dupe. And who, sir, might she be? I don't recollect to have heard of the lady before.

Nov. She, my lord? Oh, she was a kind of what-d'ye-call-em—a sort of a queen, or wife, or something or other to somebody that lived a damned while ago—Mummy told me the whole story; but, before gad, I've forgot it. But come, the busts.

Car. Bring forward the head from Herculaneum. Now, gentlemen, here is a jewel.

All. Ay, ay, let's see.

Car. 'Tis not entire, though.

Nov. So much the better.

Car. Right, sir—the very mutilations of this piece are worth all the most perfect performances of modern artists.—Now, gentlemen, here's a touchstone for your taste!

All. Great! great indeed!

Nov. Great! amazing! divine! Oh, let me embrace the dear dismembered bust! A little farther off. I'm ravished! I'm transported! What an attitude! But then the locks! How I adore the simplicity of the ancients! How unlike the present, piggish, crop-eared puppets! How gracefully they fall all adown the cheek! so decent and so grave, and——Who the devil do you think it is, Brush? Is it a man, or a woman?

Car. The connoisseurs differ. Some will have it to be the Jupiter Tonans of Phidias, and others the Venus of Paphos from Praxiteles: but I don't think it fierce enough for the first, nor handsome enough for the last.

Nov. Yes, handsome enough.

All. Very handsome; handsome enough.

Car. Not quite—therefore I am inclined to join with Signor Julio de Pampedillo, who, in a treatise dedicated to the king of the two Sicilies, calls it the Serapis of the Egyptians; and supposes it to have been fabricated about eleven hundred and three years before the Mosaic account of the creation.

Nov. Prodigious! and I dare swear true.

All. Oh! true, very true.

Puff. Upon my honour, 'tis a very fine bust; but where is de nose?

Nov. The nose; what care I for the nose? Where is de nose? Why, sir, if it had a nose, I would not give sixpence for it—How the devil should we distinguish the works of the ancients, if they were perfect?—The nose indeed! Why, I don't suppose now, but, barring the nose, Roubiliac could cut as good a head every whit——Brush, who is this man with his nose? The fellow should know something of something too, for he speaks broken English.

Brush. It is Mynheer Groningen, a great connoisseur in painting.

Nov. That may be; but as to sculpture, I am his very humble servant. A man must know damned little of statuary, that dislikes a bust for want of a nose.

Car. Right, sir—The nose itself, without the head, nay, in another's possession, would be an estate——But here are behind, gentlemen and ladies, an equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius without the horse, and a complete statue of the emperor Trajan, with only the head and legs missing; both from Herculaneum—This way, gentlemen and ladies.

Enter LADY PENTWEAZEL, ALDERMAN, *and* CALEB.

Lady Pent. Now, Mr Pentweazel, let us have none of your Blowbladder breeding. Remember you are at the court-end of the town. This is a quality-auction.

Ald. Where of course nothing is sold that is useful—I am tutored, sweet honey.

Lady Pent. Caleb, keep behind, and don't be meddling. Sir——— [*To* BRUSH.

Brush. Your pleasure, madam?

Lady Pent. I should be glad you would inform me if there are any lots of very fine old china. I find the quality are grown infinitely fond of it; and I am willing to show the world that we in the city have taste.

Brush. 'Tis a laudable resolution, madam; and I dare say, Mr Canto can supply—Bless me! what's that? [CALEB *throws down a china-dish.*

Lady Pent. That boy, I suppose! Well, if the mischievous brat has not broke a—and look how he stands!—Sirrah, sirrah, did I not bid you not meddle—Leave sucking your thumbs. What, I suppose you learnt that trick of your friend the monkey in the waggon?

Caleb. Indeed I did not go to do it, mother.

Ald. Prithee, sweet honey, don't be so passionate. What's done can't be undone. The loss is not great; come, come.

Brush. Mr Alderman is in the right. The affair is a trifle; but a twenty guinea job.

Lady Pent. Twenty guineas! You should have twenty of my teeth as———

Car. You mean if you had them———Your ladyship does not know the value of that piece of china. It is the right old Japan of the pea-green kind. Lady Mandarin offered me, if I could match it, fourscore guineas for the pair.

Lord Dupe. A fine piece, indeed!

Puff. 'Tis ver fine!

Caleb. Indeed, father, I did not break it——'Twas cracked in the middle, and so fell a-two in my hand.

Lady Pent. What! was it cracked?

Caleb. Yes, indeed, mother.

Lady Pent. There, gentlemen!

Lord Dupe. Madam, I would willingly set you right in this affair: you don't seem acquainted with these kind of things; therefore, I have the honour to tell you, that the crack in the middle is a mark of its antiquity, and enhances its value;

and these gentlemen are, I dare say, of the same opinion.

All. Oh, entirely.

Lady Pent. You are all of a gang, I think. A broken piece of china better than a whole one!

Lord Dupe. Madam, I never dispute with a lady; but this gentleman has taste; he is a foreigner, and so can't be thought prejudiced; refer it to him: the day grows late, and I want the auction to begin.

Ald. Sweet honey, leave it to the gentleman.

Lady Pent. Well, sir.

Puff. Madam, I love to serve de lady. 'Tis a ver fine piece of china. I was see such another piece sell at Amsterdam for a hundred ducats—'Tis ver well worth twenty guinea.

Caleb. Mother!—father! never stir if that gentleman ben't the same that we see'd at the painting-man's, that was so civil to mother; only he has got a black wig on, and speaks outlandish. I'll be far-enough if it en't a May-game!

Lady Pent. Hey! let me die but the boy's in the right. My dear, as I'm alive, Mr Puff, that we saw at the limner's. I told you he was a more cleverer man than I ever saw. Caleb is right; some matter of merriment, I warrant.

Puff. I wish it was. [*Aside.*] I no understand.

Car. So, Mr Puff, you are caught. [*Aside.*

Lord Dupe. This is a most unfortunate old lady———Madam, you are here under another mistake. This is Mynheer Baron de———

Lady Pent. Mynheer Figs-end. Can't I believe my own eyes? What! do you think because we live in the city we can't see?

Nov. Fire me, my lord, there may be more in this than we can guess. Its worth examining into. Come, sir, if you are Mynheer, who the devil knows you?

Puff. I was know Mr Canto mightily.

Nov. Mr Canto, do you know this baron?

Car. I see the dog will be detected, and now is my time to be even with him for his rounds of beef and roasting pigs. [*Aside.*] I can't say I ever saw the gentleman before.

Nov. Oh, oh!

Lord Dupe. The fellow is an impostor; a palpable cheat. Sir, I think you came from the Rhine—pray, how should you like walking into the Thames?

Nov. Or what think you, my lord? The rascal complained but now that the bust wanted a nose—suppose we were to supply the deficiency with his?

Lord Dupe. But justice, Mr Novice.

Car. Great rascal, indeed, gentlemen!—If rogues of this stamp get once a footing in these assemblies, adieu to all moral honesty. I think an example should be made of him—But, were I to advise, he is a properer subject for the rabble to handle than the present company.

All. Away with him!

Puff. Hands off——If I must suffer, it shall not be singly. Here is the obsequious Mr Brush, and the very courtly Mr Canto, shall be the partners of my distress. Know, then, we are all rogues, if the taking advantage of the absurdities and follies of mankind can be called roguery. I own I have been a cheat, and I glory in it. But what point will you virtuosi, you connoisseurs, gain by the detection? Will not the publishing of our crimes trumpet forth your folly?

Lord Dupe. Matchless impudence!

Puff. My noble lord here, the dilletanti, the curieu, the precieu of this nation! what infinite glory will he acquire from this story, that the Leo, the Mæcenas, the Petronius, notwithstanding his exquisite taste, has been drawn in to purchase, at an immense expence, a cart-load of—rubbish!

Lord Dupe. Gentlemen and ladies—I have the honour to take my leave.

Puff. Your lordship's most obedient—When shall I send you your Corregio, your St Anthony of Padua, your Ram Cat, my good lord?

Lord Dupe. Rascal! [*Exit* LORD DUPE.

Nov. This won't do, sir—Though my lord has not spirit enough, damn me if I quit you!

Puff. What, my sprightly squire! Pray favour me with a sight of your Oriuna—It has the relish; an indisputable antique; being a Bristol farthing, coined by a soap-boiler to pay his journeymen in the scarcity of cash, and purchased for twopence of a travelling tinker by, sir, your humble servant, Timothy Puff. Ha, ha, ha!

Nov. My Oriuna a Bristol farthing!

Puff. Most assuredly.

Nov. I'll be revenged. [*Going.*

Puff. Stay, stay, and take your bust, my sweet squire; your Serapis. Two heads, they say, are better than one; lay them together. But the locks! how gracefully they fall all adown! so decent, and so—ha, ha, ha!

Nov. Confound you!

Puff. Why, sir, if it had a nose, I would not give sixpence for it—Pray, how many years before the creation was it fabricated, squire?

Nov. I shall live to see you hanged, you dog! [*Exit.*

Puff. Nay, but, squire; ha, ha, ha!——Now, madam, to your ladyship I come; to whose discernment, aided by the sagacity of your son Caleb, I owe my discovery.

Ald. Look you, don't think to abuse my lady. I am one of the———

Puff. Quorum—I know it, Mr Alderman; but I mean to serve your worship, by humbling a little the vanity of your wife.

Lady Pent. Come along, chuck. I'll not stay to hear the rascality of the fellow.

Puff. Oh, my lady Pentweazel, correct the severity of that frown, lest you should have more of the Medusa than the Medicis in your face.

Lady Pent. Saucy jackanapes!

Puff. What, then? I have quite lost my city acquaintance? why, I've promised all my friends tickets for my lord mayor's ball through your ladyship's interest.

Lady Pent. My interest, indeed, for such a—

Puff. If Blowbladder-street has any charms—Sir—Madam—not a step—The finest gentleman! ha, ha, ha!——And what can you say for yourself, you cowardly, ill-looking rascal? [*To* CARMINE.] Desert your friend at the first pinch—your ally—your partner!——No apology, sir—I have done with you. From poverty and shame I took you, to that I restore you. Your crime be your punishment. [*Turning to the audience.*] Could I be as secure from the censure of this assembly, as I am safe from the resentment of Dupe, Novice, Squander, from the alluring baits of my amorous city lady, and the dangerous combination of my false friend, I should be happy.

Tis from your sentence I expect my fate;
Your voice alone my triumph can complete.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

ENGLISHMAN IN PARIS.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

BUCK, *the Englishman in Paris.*
SIR JOHN BUCK, *his father.*
SUBTLE, *an Englishman, settled in Paris, living by the follies of his countrymen.*
CLASSIC, *tutor to* BUCK.
MARQUIS.

WOMEN.

MRS SUBTLE, *wife to* SUBTLE.
LUCINDA, *her ward.*

Scene—Paris.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter MR SUBTLE *and* CLASSIC.

Mr Sub. WELL, well, that may be; but still I say, that a Frenchman——

Class. Is a fop; it is their national disease; not one of the qualities for which you celebrate them, but owes its origin to a foible; their taste is trifling, their gaiety grimace, and their politeness pride.

Mr Sub. Hey-day! Why, what the deuce brings you to Paris then?

Class. A debt to friendship; not but I think a short residence here a very necessary part in every man of fashion's education.

Mr Sub. Where's the use?

Class. In giving them a true relish for their own domestic happiness; a proper veneration for their national liberties; a contempt for adulation; and an honour for the extended generous commerce of their country.

Mr Sub. Why, there, indeed, you have the preference, Mr Classic: the traders here are a sharp-set, cozening people; foreigners are their food; civilities with a—ay, ay! a congee for a crown, and a shrug for a shilling; devilish dear, Mr Classic, devilish dear!

Class. To avoid their exactions, we are, Mr Subtle, recommended to your protection.

Mr Sub. Ay, and wisely they did who recommended you: Buy nothing but on mine or my lady's recommendation, and you are safe. But where was your charge? Where was Mr Buck last night? My lady made a party at cards on purpose for him, and my ward Lucinda is mightily taken with him; she longs to see him again.

Class. I am afraid with the same set his father sent him hither to avoid; but we must endeavour to inspire him with a taste for the gallantries of this court, and his passion for the lower amusements of ours will diminish of course.

Mr Sub. All the fraternity of men-makers are for that purpose without; taylors, perruquiers, hatters, hosiers——is not that Mr Buck's English servant?

Enter ROGER.

Clas. Oh! ay, honest Roger. So, the old doings, Roger! what time did your master come home?

Rog. Between five and six, pummelled to a jelly: here has been two of his old comrades followed un already; I count we shall ha' the whole gang in a se'en-night.

Clas. Comrades? who?

Rog. Dick Daylight, and Bob Breadbasket, the bruisers; they all went to the show together, where they had the devil to pay; belike they had been sent to Bridewell, hadn't a great gentleman in a blue string come by and released them.—I hear master's bell; do, Master Classic, step up and talk to un; he's now sober, and may hearken to reason.

Clas. I attend him. Mr Subtle, you won't be out of the way? [*Exit.*

Mr Sub. I shall talk a little with the tradesmen. A smoky fellow this Classic; but if Lucinda plays her cards well, we have not much to fear from that quarter: contradiction seems to be the life and soul of young Buck.—A tolerable expedient this, if it succeeds. Fleece the younker!—Psha! that's a thing of course!—but by his means to get rid of Lucinda, and securely pocket her patrimony; ay! that indeed——

Enter MRS SUBTLE.

Oh! wife! Have you opened the plot? Does the girl come into it greedily, hey?

Mrs Sub. A little squeamish at first; but I have opened her eyes. Never fear, my dear; sooner or later, women will attend to their interest.

Mr Sub. Their interest! ay, that's true; but consider, my dear, how deeply our own interest is concerned, and let that quicken your zeal.

Mrs Sub. D'ye think I am blind? But the girl has got such whimsical notions of honour, and is withal so decent and modest—I wonder where the deuce she got it; I am sure it was not in my house.

Mr Sub. How does she like Buck's person?

Mrs Sub. Well enough. But prithee, husband, leave her to my management, and consider we have more irons in the fire than one. Here is the Marquis de Soleil to meet madame de Farde to-night—And where to put them, unless we can have Buck's apartment—Oh! by the by, has count Cog sent you your share out of Mr Puntwell's losings a-Thursday?

Mr Sub. I intend calling on him this morning.

Mrs Sub. Don't fail; he's a slippery chap, you know.

Mr Sub. There's no fear. Well, but our pretty countrywoman lays about her handsomely, ha!—Hearts by hundreds! hum!

Mrs Sub. Ay! that's a noble prize, if we could but manage her; but she's so indiscreet, that she'll be blown before we have made half our market. I am this morning to give audience, on her score, to two counts and a foreign minister.

Mr Sub. Then strike whilst the iron's hot! but they'll be here before I can talk to my people; send them in, prithee. [*Exit* MRS SUBTLE.

Enter Tradesmen.

So, gentlemen. Oh! hush! we are interrupted: If they ask for your bills, you have left them at home.

Enter BUCK, CLASSIC, *and* ROGER.

Buck. Ecod, I don't know how it ended, but I remember how it begun. Oh! Master Subtle, how do'st, old buck, hey? Give's thy paw! And little Lucy, how fares it with she? Hum!

Mr Sub. What has been the matter, squire? Your face seems a little in deshabille.

Buck. A touch of the times, old boy! a small skirmish; after I was down, though! a set of cowardly sons of ———! there's George and I will box any five for their sum.

Mr Sub. But how happened it? The French are generally civil to strangers.

Buck. Oh! damned civil! to fall seven or eight upon three: Seven or eight! Ecod, we had the whole house upon us at last.

Mr Sub. But what had you done?

Buck. Done! why, nothing at all. But, wounds! how the powder flew about, and the monsieurs scoured!

Mr Sub. But what offence had either they or you committed?

Buck. Why, I was telling Domine. Last night, Dick Daylight, Bob Breadbasket, and I, were walking through one of their rues, I think they call them here, they are streets in London; but they have such devilish out-of-the-way names for things, that there is no remembering them; so we see crowds of people going into a house, and comedy pasted over the door: in we trooped with the rest, paid our cash, and sat down on the stage. Presently they had a dance; and one of the young women, with long hair trailing behind her, stood with her back to a rail, just by me: Ecod, what does me! for nothing in the world but a joke, as I hope for mercy, but ties her locks to the rails; so, when 'twas her turn to figure out, souse she flapped on her back; 'twas devilish comical; but they set up such an uproar—One whey-faced son of a bitch, that came to loose the woman, turned up his nose, and called me *bete*: Ecod, I lent him a lick in his lanthorn jaws, that will make him remember the spawn of old Marlborough, I warrant him. Another came up to second him; but I let drive at the mark, made the soup-maigre rumble in his bread-basket, and laid him sprawling! Then in poured a million of them; I was knocked down in a trice;

and what happened after, I know no more than you. But where's Lucy? I'll go see her.

Clas. Oh fie! ladies are treated here with a little more ceremony: Mr Subtle, too, has collected these people, who are to equip you for the conversation of the ladies.

Buck. Wounds! all these? What, Mr Subtle, these are monsieurs too, I suppose?

Mr Sub. No, squire, they are Englishmen: fashion has ordained, that, as you employ none but foreigners at home, you must take up with your own countrymen here.

Clas. It is not in this instance alone we are particular, Mr Subtle; I have observed many of our pretty gentlemen, who condescend to use entirely their native language here, sputter nothing but bad French in the side-boxes at home.

Buck. Look you, sir; as to you, and your wife, and Miss Lucy, I like you all well enough; but the devil a good thing else have I seen since I lost sight of Dover. The men are all puppies, mincing and dancing, and chattering, and grinning: the women are a parcel of painted dolls; their food's fit for hogs; and as for their language, let them learn it that like it, I'll none on't; no, nor their frippery neither: So here you may all march to the place from whence you—Hark'e! What, are you an Englishman?

Barb. Yes, sir.

Buck. Domine! look here, what a monster the monkey has made of himself?—Sirrah, if your string was long enough, I'd do your business myself, you dog, to sink a bold Briton into such a sneaking, snivelling—the rascal looks as he had not had a piece of beef and pudding in his paunch these twenty years. I'll be hanged if the rogue han't been fed on frogs ever since he came over! Away with your trumpery!

Clas. Mr Buck, a compliance with the customs of the country in which we live, where neither our religion nor our morals are concerned, is a duty we owe ourselves.

Mr Sub. Besides, squire, Lucinda expects that you should usher her to public places; which it would be impossible to do in that dress.

Buck. Why not?

Mr Sub. You'd be mobbed.

Buck. Mobbed! I should be glad to see that—No, no! they han't spirit enough to mob here; but come, since these fellows here are English, and it is the fashion, try on your fooleries.

Mr Sub. Mr Dauphine, come, produce—Upon my word, in an elegant taste, sir——This gentleman has had the honour to——

Dauph. To work for all the beaux esprits of the court. My good fortune commenced by a small alteration in a cut of the corner of the sleeve for count Crib; but the addition of a ninth plait in the skirt of Marshal Tonerre, was applauded by madam la duchess Rambouillet, and totally established the reputation of your humble servant.

Buck. Hold your jaw, and dispatch.

Mr Sub. A word with you—I don't think it impossible to get you acquainted with madam de Rambouillet.

Buck. An't she a papist?

Mr Sub. Undoubtedly.

Buck. Then I'll ha' nothing to say to her.

Mr Sub. Oh fy! who minds the religion of a pretty woman? Besides, all this country are of the same.

Buck. For that reason I don't care how soon I get out of it: Come, let's get rid of you as soon as we can. And what are you, hey?

Bar. Je suis peruquier, Monsieur.

Buck. Speak English, you son of a whore!

Bar. I am a perriwig-maker, sir.

Buck. Then why could not you say so at first? What, are you ashamed of your mother-tongue? I knew this fellow was a puppy, by his pig-tail. Come, let's see your handy-work.

Bar. As I found you were in a hurry, I have brought you, sir, something that will do for the present: But a peruque is a different *ouvrage*, another sort of a thing here from what it is *en Angleterre;* we must consult the colour of the complexion, and the *tour de visage*, the form of the face; for which end it will be necessary to regard your countenance in different lights: A little to the right, if you please.

Buck. Why, you dog, d'ye think I'll submit to be exercised by you?

Bar. Oh mon Dieu! Monsieur, if you don't, it will be impossible to make your wig *comme il faut.*

Buck. Sirrah, speak another French word, and I'll kick you down stairs.

Bar. Gad's curse! Would you resemble some of your countrymen, who, at the first importation, with nine hairs of a side to a brawny pair of checks, look like a Saracen's head! Or else their water-gruel jaws, sunk in a thicket of curls, appear for all the world like a lark in a soup-dish!

Mr Sub. Come, squire, submit; 'tis but for once.

Buck. Well, but what must I do?

[*Places him in a chair.*

Bar. To the right, sir—now to the left——now your full——and now, sir, I'll do your business.

Mr Sub. Look at yourself a little; see what a revolution this has occasioned in your whole figure.

Buck. Yes, a bloody pretty figure indeed! But 'tis a figure I am damnably ashamed of: I would not be seen by Jack Wildfire or Dick Riot for fifty pounds in this trim, for all that.

Mr Sub. Upon my honour, dress greatly improves you! Your opinion, Mr Classic?

Clas. They do mighty well, sir; and in a little time Mr Buck will be easy in them.

Buck. Shall I? I am glad on't, for I am dam-

nably uneasy at present, Mr Subtle. What must I do now?

Mr Sub. Now, sir, if you'll call upon my wife, you'll find Lucinda with her, and I'll wait on you presently.

Buck. Come along, Domine! But harkee, Mr Subtle, I'll out of my trammels when I hunt with the king.

Mr Sub. Well, well.

Buck. I'll on with my jemmies; none of your black bags and jack-boots for me.

Mr Sub. No, no.

Buck. I'll show them the odds on't, old Silver-tail! I will. Hey?

Mr Sub. Ay, ay.

Buck. Hedge, stake, or stile, over we go!

Mr Sub. Ay; but Mr Classic waits.

Buck. But d'ye think they'll follow?

Mr Sub. Oh no! Impossible!

Buck. Did I tell you what a chase she carried me last Christmas eve? We unkennelled at——

Mr Sub. I am busy now; at any other time.

Buck. You'll follow us. I have sent for my hounds and horses.

Mr Sub. Have you?

Buck. They shall make the tour of Europe with me: and then there's Tom Atkins the huntsman, the two whippers-in, and little Joey the groom, comes with them. Damme, what a strange place they'll think this! But no matter for that; then we shall be company enough of ourselves. But you'll follow us in? [*Exit.*

Mr Sub. In ten minutes—an impertinent jackanapes! But I shall soon ha' done with him.—So, gentlemen; well, you see we have a good subject to work upon. Harkee, Dauphine, I must have more than twenty per cent out of that suit.

Dauph. Upon my soul, Mr Subtle, I can't!

Mr Sub. Why, I have always that upon new.

Dauph. New, sir! why, as I hope to be——

Mr Sub. Come, don't lie; don't damn yourself, Dauphine; don't be a rogue; did not I see at Madam Fripon's, that waistcoat and sleeves upon Colonel Crambo?

Dauph. As to the waistcoat and sleeves, I own; but for the body and lining—may I never see——

Mr Sub. Come, don't be a scoundrel; five-and thirty, or I've done.

Dauph. Well, if I must, I must.

[*Exit* DAUPH.

Mr Sub. I must keep these fellows under, or I shall have a fine time on't; they know they can't do without me.

Enter MRS SUBTLE.

Mrs Sub. The Calais letters, my dear.

Mr Sub. [*Reads.*]—Ah! ah! Calais—the Dover packet arrived last night, loading as follows: Six tailors, ditto barbers; five milliners, bound to Paris to study fashions; four citizens come to settle here for a month, by way of seeing the country; ditto, their wives; ten French valets, with nine cooks, all from Newgate, where they had been sent for robbing their masters; nine figure dancers, exported in September, ragged and lean, imported well clad, and in good case; twelve dogs, ditto bitches, with two monkeys, and a litter of puppies, from Mother Midnight's, in the Hay-market: a precious cargo! *Post-cript.* One of the coasters is just put in, with his grace the duke of ————, my lord, and an old gentleman whose name I can't learn!—Gadso! Well, my dear, I must run, and try to secure these customers; there's no time to be lost. [*Exit.*

Enter CLASSIC.

Mrs Sub. So, Mr Classic; what, have you left the young couple together?

Clas. They want your ladyship's presence, madam, for a short tour to the Thuilleries. I have received some letters, which I must answer immediately.

Mrs Sub. Oh! well, well; no ceremony; we are all of a family, you know. Servant! [*Exit.*

Enter ROGER.

Clas. Roger!

Rog. Anon!

Clas. I have just received a letter from your old master; he was landed at Calais, and will be this evening at Paris. It is absolutely necessary that this circumstance should be concealed from his son; for which purpose, you must wait at the Piccardy gate, and deliver a letter, I shall give you, into his own hand.

Rog. I'll warrant you.

Clas. But, Roger, be secret.

Rog. O lud! never you fear. [*Exit.*

Clas. So, Mr Subtle, I see your aim. A pretty lodging we have hit upon; the mistress a commode, and the master a——But who can this ward be? Possibly the neglected punk of some riotous man of quality. 'Tis lucky Mr Buck's father is arrived, or my authority would prove but an insufficient match for my pupil's obstinacy. This mad boy! How difficult, how disagreeable a task have I undertaken! And how general, yet how dangerous, an experiment is it to expose our youth, in the very fire and fury of their blood, to all the follies and extravagance of this fantastic court! Far different was the prudent practice of our forefathers:

They scorned to truck, for base unmanly arts,
Their native plainness, and their honest hearts;
Whene'er they deigned to visit haughty France,
'Twas armed with bearded dart, and pointed lance.

No pompous pageants lured their curious eye,
No charms for them had fops or flattery;
Paris, they knew, their streamers waved around,
There Britons saw a British Harry crowned.
Far other views attract our modern race,
Trulls, toupees, trinkets, bags, brocade, and lace;
A flaunting form, and a fictitious face.
Rouse! Reassume! Refuse a Gallic reign!
Nor let their arts win that their arms could never gain. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter MR CLASSIC *and* ROGER.

Rog. OLD maister's at a coffee-house next street, and will tarry till you send for 'un.

Clas. By-and-by; in the dusk, bring him up the back-stairs. You must be careful that nobody sees him.

Rog. I warrant you.

Clas. Let sir John know that I would wait on him myself, but I don't think it safe to quit the house an instant.

Rog. Ay, ay. [*Exit* ROGER.

Clas. I suppose, by this time, matters are pretty well settled within, and my absence only wanted to accomplish the scene; but I shall take care to——Oh! Mr Subtle and his lady!

[*Exit* CLAS.

Enter MR *and* MRS SUBTLE.

Mrs Sub. Oh, delightfully! Now, my dearest, I hope you will no longer dispute my abilities for forming a female?

Mr Sub. Never, never: How the baggage leered!

Mrs Sub. And the booby gaped!

Mr Sub. So kind, and yet so coy; so free, but then so reserved: Oh, she has him!

Mrs Sub. Ay, ay; the fish is hooked: but then safely to land him———Is Classic suspicious?

Mr Sub. Not that I observe; but the secret must soon be blazed.

Mrs Sub. Therefore dispatch: I have laid a trap to inflame his affection.

Mr Sub. How?

Mrs Sub. He shall be treated with a display of Lucy's talents; her singing and dancing.

Mr Sub. Psha! Her singing and dancing!

Mrs Sub. Ah! You don't know, husband, half the force of these accomplishments in a fashionable figure.

Mr Sub. I doubt her execution.

Mrs Sub. You have no reason; she does both well enough to flatter a fool, especially with love for her second: besides, I have a coup de maitre, a sure card.

Mr Sub. What's that?

Mrs Sub. A rival.

Mr Sub. Who?

Mrs Sub. The language master: he may be easily equipt for the expedition; a second-hand tawdry suit of cloaths will pass him on our countryman for a marquis; and then, to excuse his speaking our language so well, he may have been educated early in England. But hush! The squire approaches; don't seem to observe him.

Enter BUCK.

For my part, I never saw any thing so altered since I was born: In my conscience, I believe she's in love with him.

Buck. Hush! [*Aside.*

Mr Sub. D'ye think so?

Mrs Sub. Why, where's the wonder? He's a pretty, good-humoured, sprightly fellow: and, for the time, such an improvement! Why, he wears his clothes as easily, and moves as genteelly, as if he had been at Paris these twenty years.

Mr Sub. Indeed! How does he dance?

Mrs Sub. Why, he has had but three lessons from Marseil, and he moves already like Dupre. Oh! three months stay here will render him a perfect model for the English court!

Mr Sub. Gadso! No wonder, then, with these qualities, that he has caught the heart of my ward; but we must take care that the girl does nothing imprudent.

Mrs Sub. Oh, dismiss your fears; her family, good sense, and, more than all, her being educated under my eye, render them unnecessary; besides, Mr Buck is too much a man of honour to——

[*He interrupts them.*]

Buck. Damn me if I an't!

Mrs Sub. Bless me, sir! you here? I did not expect———

Buck. I beg pardon: but all that I heard was, that Mr Buck was a man of honour. I wanted to have some chat with you, madam, in private.

Mr Sub. Then I'll withdraw. You see I dare trust you alone with my wife.

Buck. So you may safely; I have other game in view. Servant, Mr Subtle.

Mrs Sub. Now for a puzzling scene: I long to know how he'll begin.—[*Aside.*]——Well, Mr Buck, your commands with me, sir?

Buck. Why, madam—I, ah—I, ah—but let's shut the door: I was, madam—ah! ah! Can't you guess what I want to talk about?

Mrs Sub. Not I, indeed, sir.

Buck. Well, but try; upon my soul, I'll tell you if you're right.

Mrs Sub. It will be impossible for me to divine—But come, open a little.

Buck. Why, have you observed nothing?

Mrs Sub. About who?

Buck. Why, about me.

Mrs Sub. Yes; you are new-dressed, and your clothes become you.

Buck. Pretty well: but it an't that.

Mrs Sub. What is it?

Buck. Why, ah! ah! upon my soul, I can't bring it out!

Mrs Sub. Nay, then, 'tis to no purpose to wait: write your mind.

Buck. No, no; stop a moment, and I will tell.

Mrs Sub. Be expeditious, then.

Buck. Why, I wanted to talk about Miss Lucinda.

Mrs Sub. What of her?

Buck. She's a bloody fine girl; and I should be glad to——

Mrs Sub. To—Bless me! What, Mr Buck, and in my house? Oh, Mr Buck, you have deceived me! Little did I think, that, under the appearance of so much honesty, you could go o————

Buck. Upon my soul, you're mistaken!

Mrs Sub. A poor orphan too! deprived, in her earliest infancy, of a father's prudence and a mother's care.

Buck. Why, I tell you——

Mrs Sub. So sweet, so lovely an innocence! her mind as spotless as her person!

Buck. Hey-day!

Mrs Sub. And me, sir; where had you your thoughts of me? How dared you suppose that I would connive at such a————

Buck. The woman is bewitched.

Mrs Sub. I! whose untainted reputation the blistering tongue of slander never blasted. Full fifteen years, in wedlock's sacred bands, have I lived unreproached; and now to————

Buck. Odd's fury! She's in heroics.

Mrs Sub. And this from you too, whose fair outside and bewitching tongue had so far lulled my fears, I dared have trusted all my daughters, nay, myself too, singly, with you.

Buck. Upon my soul, and so you might safely.

Mrs Sub. Well, sir, and what have you to urge in your defence?

Buck. Oh, oh! What, are you got pretty well to the end of your line, are you? And now, if you'll be quiet a bit, we may make a shift to understand one another a little.

Mrs Sub. Be quick, and ease me of my fears.

Buck. Ease you of your fears! I don't know how the devil you got them. All that I wanted to say was, that Miss Lucy was a fine wench; and if she was as willing as me——

Mrs Sub. Willing! Sir! What demon——

Buck. If you are in your airs again, I may as well decamp.

Mrs Sub. I am calm; go on.

Buck. Why, that if she liked me as well as I liked her, we might, perhaps, if you liked it too, be married together.

Mrs Sub. Oh, sir! if that was indeed your drift, I am satisfied. But don't indulge your wish too much; there are numerous obstacles; your father's consent, the law of the land————

Buck. What laws?

Mrs Sub. All clandestine marriages are void in this country.

Buck. Damn this country!—In London now, a footman may drive to May-fair, and in five minutes be tacked to a countess; but there's no liberty here.

Mrs Sub. Some inconsiderate couples have indeed gone off post to Protestant states; but I hope my ward will have more prudence.

Buck. Well, well, leave that to me. D'ye think she likes me?

Mrs Sub. Why, to deal candidly with you, she does.

Buck. Does she, by————

Mrs Sub. Calm your transports.

Buck. Well! but how? She did not, did she? Hey? Come now, tell————

Mrs Sub. I hear her coming; this is her hour for music and dancing.

Buck. Could I not have a peep?

Mrs Sub. Withdraw to this corner.

Enter LUCINDA, *with* GAMUT.

Luc. The news, the news, Monsieur Gamut; I die, if I have not the first intelligence! What's doing at Versailles? When goes the court to Marli? Does Rameau write the next opera? What say the critics of Voltaire's Duke de Foix? —Answer me all in a breath.

Buck. A brave-spirited girl! She'll take a five-barred gate in a fortnight.

Gam. The conversation of the court your ladyship has engrossed, ever since you last honoured it with your appearance.

Luc. Oh, you flatterer! have I? Well, and what fresh victims? But 'tis impossible; the sunshine of a northern beauty is too feeble to thaw the icy heart of a French courtier.

Gam. What injustice to your own charms and our discernment!

Luc. Indeed! nay, I care not—if I have fire enough to warm one British bosom, rule! rule! ye Paris belles! I envy not your conquests.

Mrs Sub. Meaning you.

Buck. Indeed!

Mrs Sub. Certain!

Buck. Hush!

Luc. But come, a truce to gallantry, Gamut, and to the business of the day. Oh! I am quite enchanted with this new instrument; 'tis so languishing and so portable, and so soft and so silly —But come! for your last lesson.

Gam. D'ye like the words?

Luc. Oh, charming! They are so melting, and easy, and elegant. Now for a *coup' d'essai.*

Gam. Take care of your expression; let your eyes and address accompany the sound and sentiment.

Luc. But, dear Gamut, if I am out, don't interrupt me; correct me afterwards.

Gam. Allons, commencez. [LUCINDA *sings.*

[*An occasional song is here introduced by* LUCINDA.]

Gam. Bravo, bravo!

Buck. Bravo! bravissimo! My lady, what was the song about? [*Aside to* MRS SUBTLE.

Mrs Sub. Love: 'tis her own composing.

Buck. What, does she make verses then?

Mrs Sub. Finely. I take you to be the subject of these.

Buck. Ah! d'ye think so? Gad! I thought by her ogling, 'twas the music-man himself.

Luc. Well, Mr Gamut; tolerably well, for so young a scholar?

Gam. Inimitably, Madam! Your ladyship's progress will undoubtedly fix my fortune.

Enter Servant.

Luc. Your servant, sir.

Ser. Madam, your dancing-master, Monsieur Kitteau.

Luc. Admit him.

Enter KITTEAU.

Monsieur Kitteau, I can't possibly take a lesson this morning, I am so busy; but if you please, I'll just hobble over a minuet, by way of exercise.

[*A minuet here introduced.*

Enter Servant.

Ser. Monsieur le Marquis de———

Luc. Admit him this instant.

Mrs Sub. A lover of Lucinda! a Frenchman of fashion, and vast fortune.

Buck. Never heed; I'll soon do his business, I'll warrant you.

Enter MARQUIS.

Luc. My dear Marquis!

Mar. Ma chere adorable!———'Tis an age since I saw you.

Luc. Oh! an eternity! But 'tis your own fault, though.

Mar. My misfortune, *ma princesse!* But now I'll redeem my error, and root for ever here.

Buck. I shall make a shift to transplant you, I believe.

Luc. You can't conceive how your absence has distressed me. Demand of these gentlemen the melancholy mood of my mind.

Mar. But now that I'm arrived, we'll dance and sing, and drive care to the———Ha! Monsieur Kitteau! Have you practised this morning?

Luc. I had just given my hand to Kitteau before you came.

Mar. I was in hopes that honour would have been reserved for me. May I flatter myself that your ladyship will do me the honour of venturing upon the fatigue of another minuet this morning with me?

Enter BUCK *briskly. Takes her hand.*

Buck. Not that you know of, Monsieur.

Mar. Hey! *Diable! Quelle bete!*

Buck. Hark'e, Monsieur Ragout, if you repeat that word *bete*, I shall make you wallow it again, as I did last night one of your countrymen.

Mar. Quel savage!

Buck. And another word; as I know you can speak very good English, if you will, when you don't, I shall take it for granted you're abusing me, and treat you accordingly.

Mar. Cavalier enough! But you are protected here. Mademoiselle, who is this officious gentleman? How comes he to be interested? Some relation, I suppose?

Buck. No; I'm a lover.

Mar. Oh! Oh! a rival! *Eh morbleu!* a dangerous one too. Ha, ha! Well, Monsieur, what, and I suppose you presume to give laws to this lady; and are determined, out of your very great and singular affection, to knock down every mortal she likes, *a-la-mode d'Angleterre?* Hey, Monsieur Roast-beef?

Buck. No; but I intend that lady for my wife: consider her as such; and don't choose to have her soiled by the impertinent addresses of every French fop, a-la-mode de Paris, Monsieur Fricassy!

Mar. Fricassy!

Buck. We.

Luc. A truce, a truce, I beseech you, gentlemen: it seems I am the golden prize for which you plead; produce your pretensions; you are the representatives of your respective countries. Begin, marquis, for the honour of France; let me hear what advantages I am to derive from a conjugal union with you.

Mar. Abstracted from those which I think are pretty visible, a perpetual residence in this paradise of pleasures; to be the object of universal adoration; to say what you please, go where you will, do what you like, form fashions; hate your husband, and let him see it; indulge

your gallant, and let the other know it; run in debt, and oblige the poor devil to pay it. He! Ma chere! There are pleasures for you.

Luc. Bravo, marquis! these are allurements for a woman of spirit: but don't let us conclude hastily; hear the other side. What have you to offer, Mr Buck, in favour of England?

Buck. Why, madam, for a woman of spirit, they give you the same advantages at London as at Paris, with a privilege forgot by the marquis, an indisputable right to cheat at cards, in spite of detection.

Mar. Pardon me, sir, we have the same; but I thought this privilege so known and universal, that 'twas needless to mention it.

Buck. You give up nothing, I find: but to tell you my blunt thoughts in a word, if any woman can be so abandoned, as to rank amongst the comforts of matrimony, the privilege of hating her husband, and the liberty of committing every folly and every vice contained in your catalogue, she may stay single for me; for, damn me, if I am a husband fit for her humour! that's all.

Mar. I told you, mademoiselle!

Luc. But stay; what have you to offer as a counterbalance for these pleasures?

Buck. Why, I have, madam, courage to protect you, good-nature to indulge your love, and health enough to make gallants useless, and too good a fortune to render running in debt necessary. Find that here, if you can.

Mar. Bagatelle!

Luc. Spoke with the sincerity of a Briton; and, as I don't perceive that I shall have any use for the fashionable liberties you propose, you'll pardon, marquis, my national prejudice; here's my hand, Mr Buck.

Buck. Servant, monsieur.

Mar. Serviteur.

Buck. No offence?

Mar. Not in the least; I am only afraid the reputation of that lady's taste will suffer a little; and to shew her at once the difference of her choice, the preference, which, if bestowed on me, would not fail to exasperate you, I support without murmuring; so, that favour which would probably have provoked my fate, is now your protection. Voila la politesse Francoise, madam; I have the honour to be—Bon jour, monsieur.—Tol de rol! [*Exit* MAR.

Buck. The fellow bears it well. Now, if you'll give me your hand, we'll in, and settle matters with Mr Subtle.

Luc. 'Tis now my duty to obey.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter ROGER, *peeping about.*

Rog. The coast is clear; sir, sir, you may come in now, Mr Classic.

Enter MR CLASSIC *and* SIR JOHN BUCK.

Clas. Roger, watch at the door. I wish, sir John, I could give you a more cheerful welcome: but we have no time to lose in ceremony; you are arrived in the critical minute; two hours more would have placed the inconsiderate couple out of the reach of pursuit.

Sir John. How can I acknowledge your kindness? You have preserved my son; you have saved——

Clas. I have done my duty; but of that——

Rog. Maister and the young woman's coming.

Clas. Sir John, place yourself here, and be a witness how near a crisis is the fate of your family.

Enter BUCK *and* LUCINDA.

Buck. Psha! What signifies her? 'Tis odds whether she would consent, from the fear of my father. Besides, she told me we could never be married here; and so pack up a few things, and we'll off in a post-chaise directly.

Luc. Stay, Mr Buck, let me have a moment's reflection——What am I about? Contriving, in concert with the most profligate couple that ever disgraced human nature, to impose an indigent orphan on the sole representative of a wealthy and honourable family! Is this a character becoming my birth and education? What must be the consequence? Sure detection and contempt; contempt even from him, when his passions cool. I have resolved, sir.

Buck. Madam!

Luc. As the expedition we are upon the point of taking, is to be a lasting one, we ought not to be over hasty in our resolution.

Buck. Pshaw! Stuff! When a thing's resolved, the sooner 'tis over the better.

Luc. But before it is absolutely resolved, give me leave to beg an answer to two questions.

Buck. Make haste, then.

Luc. What are your thoughts of me?

Buck. Thoughts! Nay, I don't know; why, that you are a sensible, civil, handsome, handy girl, and will make a devilish good wife. That is all, I think.

Luc. But of my rank and fortune?

Buck. Mr Subtle says they are both great; but that's no business of mine; I was always determined to marry for love.

Luc. Generously said! My birth, I believe, won't disgrace you; but for my fortune, your friend, Mr Subtle, I fear, has anticipated you there.

Buck. Much good may it do him; I have enough for both: but we lose time, and may be prevented.

Luc. By whom?

Buck. By Domine; or, perhaps, father may come.

Luc. Your father! You think he would prevent you, then?

Buck. Perhaps he would.

Luc. And why?

Buck. Nay, I don't know; but, pshaw! 'zooks! this is like saying one's catechise.

Luc. But don't you think your father's consent necessary?

Buck. No: why 'tis I am to be married, and not he. But come along: old fellows love to be obstinate; but, 'ecod I am as mulish as he; and to tell you the truth, if he had proposed me a wife, that would have been reason enough to make me dislike her; and I don't think I should be half so hot about marrying you, only I thought 'twould plague the old fellow damnably. So, my pretty partner, come along; let us have no more——

Enter SIR JOHN BUCK, *and* CLASSIC.

Sir John. Sir, I am obliged to you for this declaration, as, to it, I owe the entire subjection of that paternal weakness which has hitherto suspended the correction your abandoned libertinism has long provoked. You have forgot the duty you owe a father, disclaimed my protection, cancelled the natural covenant between us; 'tis time I now should give you up to the guidance of your own guilty passions, and treat you as a stranger to my blood for ever.

Buck. I told you what would happen if he should come; but you may thank yourself.

Sir John. Equally weak as wicked, the dupe of a raw, giddy girl. But, proceed, sir; you have nothing farther to fear from me; complete your project, and add her ruin to your own.

Buck. Sir, as to me, you may say what you please; but for the young woman, she does not deserve it; but now she wanted me to get your consent, and told me that she had never a penny of portion into the bargain.

Sir John. A stale, obvious artifice! She knew the discovery of the fraud must follow close on your inconsiderate marriage, and would then plead the merits of her prior candid discovery.—The lady, doubtless, sir, has other secrets to disclose; but as her cunning revealed the first, her policy will preserve the rest.

Luc. What secrets?

Buck. Be quiet, I tell you; let him alone, and he'll cool of himself by-and-by.

Luc. Sir, I am yet the protectress of my own honour; in justice to that, I must demand an explanation. What secrets, sir?

Sir John. Oh, perhaps, a thousand! But I am to blame to call them secrets; the customs of this gay country give sanction, and stamp merit upon vice! and vanity will here proclaim, what modesty would elsewhere blush to whisper.

Luc. Modesty! You suspect my virtue, then?

Sir John. You are a lady; but the fears of a father may be permitted to neglect a little your plan of politeness: therefore, to be plain, from your residence in this house, from your connection with these people, and from the scheme which my presence has interrupted, I have suspicions—of what nature, ask yourself.

Luc. Sir, you have reason; appearances are against me, I confess; but when you have heard my melancholy story, you'll own you have wronged me, and learn to pity her, whom you now hate.

Sir John. Madam, you misemploy your time; there, tell your story, there it will be believed; I am too knowing in the wiles of women to be softened by a syren-tear, or imposed on by an artful tale.

Luc. But hear me, sir; on my knee I beg it, nay, I demand it; you have wronged me, and must do me justice.

Clas. I am sure, madam, sir John will be glad to find his fears are false; but you cannot blame him.

Luc. I don't, sir; and I shall but little trespass on his patience. When you know, sir, that I am the orphan of an honourable and once wealthy family, whom her father, misguided by pernicious politics, brought with him, in her earliest infancy, to France; that dying here, he bequeathed me, with the poor remnant of our shattered fortune, to the direction of this rapacious pair; I am sure you'll tremble for me.

Sir John. Go on.

Luc. But when you know that, plundered of the little fortune left me, I was reluctantly compelled to aid this plot; forced to comply, under the penalty of deepest want; without one hospitable roof to shelter me; without one friend to comfort or relieve me; you must, you can't but pity me.

Sir John. Proceed.

Luc. To this, when you are told, that, previous to your coming, I had determined never to wed your son, at least without your knowledge and consent, I hope your justice then will credit and acquit me.

Sir John. Madam, your tale is plausible and moving; I hope 'tis true. Here comes the explainer of this riddle.

Enter MR *and* MRS SUBTLE.

Mr Sub. Buck's father!

Sir John. I'll take some other time, sir, to thank you for the last proofs of your friendship to my family; in the mean time be so candid as to instruct us in the knowledge of this lady, whom, it seems, you have chosen for the partner of my son.

Mr Sub. Mr Buck's partner——I choose——I—I——

Sir John. No equivocation or reserve; your plot is revealed, known to the bottom. Who is the lady?

Mr Sub. Lady, sir? the lady's a gentlewoman, sir.

Sir John. By what means?

Mr Sub. By her father and mother.

Sir John. Who were they, sir?

Mr Sub. Her mother was of——I forget her maiden name.

Sir John. You han't forgot her father's?

Mr Sub. No, no, no!

Sir John. Tell it, then.

Mr Sub. She has told it you, I suppose.

Sir John. No matter; I must have it, sir, from you. Here's some mystery.

Mr Sub. 'Twas Worthy.

Sir John. Not the daughter of sir Gilbert?

Mr Sub. You have it.

Sir John. My poor girl!———I, indeed, have wronged, but will redress you. And pray, sir, after the many pressing letters you received from me, how came this truth concealed? But I guess your motive. Dry up your tears, Lucinda; at last you have found a father. Hence, ye degenerate, ye abandoned wretches, who, abusing the confidence of your country, unite to plunder those ye promise to protect.

[*Exeunt* MR *and* MRS SUBTLE.

Luc. Am I then justified?

Sir John. You are: your father was my first and firmest friend; I mourned his loss; and long have sought for thee in vain, Lucinda.

Buck. Pray, han't I some merit in finding her? she's mine, by the custom of the manor.

Sir John. Yours! First study to deserve her; she's mine, sir; I have just redeemed this valuable treasure, and shall not trust it in a spendthrift's hands.

Buck. What would you have me do, sir?

Sir John. Disclaim the partners of your riot, polish your manners, reform your pleasures, and, before you think of governing others, learn to direct yourself. And now, my beauteous ward, we'll for the land where first you saw the light, and there endeavour to forget the long, long bondage you have suffered here. I suppose, sir, we shall have no difficulty in persuading you to accompany us; it is not in France I am to hope for your reformation. I have now learned, that he, who transports a profligate son to Paris, by way of mending his manners, only adds the vices and follies of that country to those of his own.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE KNIGHTS.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
HARTOP, *in love with* MISS SUKEY'S *fortune.*	JENNY, *a chambermaid.*
SIR GREGORY GAZETTE, *a simple knight.*	MISS PENELOPE TRIFLE, *an old maid.*
JENKINS, *friend to* HARTOP.	MISS SUKEY TRIFLE, *her niece.*
TIM, *son to* SIR GREGORY GAZETTE.	
ROBIN, *servant to* SIR GREGORY GAZETTE.	

Scene—a country town.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A room.*

HARTOP *and* JENKINS *discovered.*

Jen. I SHOULD not chuse to marry into such a family.

Har. Choice, dear Dick, is very little concerned in the matter; and, to convince you that love is not the minister of my counsels, know, that I never saw but once the object of my present purpose; and that too at a time, and in a circumstance, not very likely to stamp a favourable impression. What think you of a raw boarding-school girl at Lincoln-Minster, with a mind unpolished, a figure uninformed, and a set of features tainted with the colour of her unwholesome food?

Jen. No very engaging object indeed, Hartop.

Har. Your thoughts now were mine then; but some connexions I have since had with her father, have given birth to my present design upon her. You are no stranger to the situation of my circumstances: my neighbourhood to sir Penurious Trifle, was a sufficient motive for his advancing what money I wanted by way of mortgage; the hard terms he imposed upon me, and the little regard I have paid to economy, has made it necessary for me to attempt, by some scheme, the re-establishment of my fortune. This young lady's simplicity, not to say ignorance, presented her at once as a proper subject for my purpose.

Jen. Success to you, Jack, with all my soul! a fellow of your spirit and vivacity, mankind ought to support, for the sake of themselves. For whatever Seneca and the other moral writers may have suggested in contempt of riches, it is plain their maxims were not calculated for the world as it now stands. In days of yore, indeed, when virtue was called wisdom, and vice folly, such principles might have been encouraged: but as the present subjects of our enquiry are, not what a man is, but what he has; as to be rich, is to be wise and virtuous, and to be poor, ignorant, and vicious—I heartily applaud your plan.

Har. Your observation is but too just.

Jen. But, prithee, in the first place, how can you gain admittance to your mistress? and, in the second, is the girl independent of her father? His consent, I suppose, you have no thought of obtaining?

Har. Some farther proposals concerning my estate; such as an increase of the mortgage, or an absolute sale, is a sufficient pretence for a visit; and, as to the cash, twenty to my knowledge; independent too, you rogue! and besides, an only child, you know; and then, when things are done, they can't be undone—and 'tis well 'tis no worse—and a hundred such pretty proverbs, will, 'tis great odds, reconcile the old fellow at last. Besides, my papa *in posse*, has a foible, which, if I condescend to humour, I have his soul, my dear.

Jen. Prithee, now you are in spirits, give me a portrait of sir Penurious; though he is my neighbour, yet he is so domestic an animal, that I know no more of him than the common country conversation, that he is a thrifty, wary man.

Har. The very abstract of penury! Sir John Cutler, with his transmigrated stockings, was but a type of him. For instance, the barber has the growth of his and his daughter's head once a-year, for shaving the knight once a fortnight; his shoes are made with the leather of a coach of his grandfather's, built in the year One; his male-servant is footman, groom, carter, coachman, and taylor; his maid employs her leisure hours in plain-work for the neighbours, which sir Penurious takes care, as her labour is for his emolument, shall be as many as possible, by joining with his daughter in scouring the rooms, making the beds, &c.—Thus much for his moral character. Then, as to his intellectual, he is a mere *charte blanche*; the last man he is with must afford him matter for the next he goes to: but a story is his idol; throw him in that, and he swallows it; no matter what, raw or roasted, savoury or insipid, down it goes, and up again to the first person he meets. It is upon this basis I found my favour with the knight, having acquired patience enough to hear his stories, and equipped myself with a quantity sufficient to furnish him. His manner is indeed peculiar, and, for once or twice, entertaining enough. I'll give you a specimen——Is not that an equipage?

Jen. Hey! yes, faith; and the owner an acquaintance of mine: Sir Gregory Gazette, by Jupiter! and his son Tim with him. Now I can match your knight. He must come this way to the parlour. We'll have a scene: but take your cue; he is a country politician.

SIR GREGORY *entering, and Waiter.*

Sir Gre. What, neither the Gloucester Journal, nor the Worcester Courant, nor the Northampton Mercury, nor the Chester? Mr Jenkins, I am your humble servant: A strange town this, Mr Jenkins; no news stirring, no papers taken in! Is that gentleman a stranger, Mr Jenkins? Pray, sir, not to be too bold, you don't come from London?

Har. But last night.

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day, that's wonderful! Mr Jenkins, introduce me.

Jen. Mr Hartop, sir Gregory Gazette.

Sir Gre. Sir, I am proud to——Well, sir, and what news? You come from——Pray, sir, are you a parliament-man?

Har. Not I, indeed, sir.

Sir Gre. Good lack! may be, belong to the law?

Har. Nor that.

Sir Gre. Oh, then in some of the offices; the treasury, or the exchequer?

Har. Neither, sir.

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day, that's wonderful! Well, but Mr—Pray, what name did Mr Jenkins, Ha, Ha——

Har. Hartop.

Sir Gre. Ay, true!—What, not of the Hartops of Boston?

Har. No.

Sir Gre. May be not. There is, Mr Hartop, one thing that I envy you Londoners in much—quires of newspapers! Now I reckon you read a matter of eight sheets every day?

Har. Not one.

Sir Gre. Wonderful!—Then, may be, you are about court; and so, being at the fountain-head, know what is in the papers before they are printed.

Har. I never trouble my head about them.—An old fool! [*Aside.*

Sir Gre. Good Lord! Your friend, Mr Jenkins, is very close.

Jen. Why, sir Gregory, Mr Hartop is much in the secrets above; and it becomes a man so trusted to be wary, you know.

Sir Gre. May be so, may be so. Wonderful! Ay, ay; a great man, no doubt.

Jen. But I'll give him a better insight into your character, and that will induce him to throw off his reserve.

Sir Gre. May be so: do, do; ay, ay.

Jen. Prithee, Jack, don't be so crusty: indulge the knight's humour a little! Besides, if I guess right, it may be necessary for the conduct of your design to contract a pretty strict intimacy there.

Har. Well, do as you will.

Jen. Sir Gregory, Mr Hartop's ignorance of your character made him a little shy in his replies; but you will now find him more communicative; and, in your ear—he is a treasure; he is in all the mysteries of government; at the bottom of every thing.

Sir Gre. Wonderful! a treasure! ay, may be so.

Jen. And, that you may have him to yourself, I'll go in search of your son.

Sir Gre. Do so, do so: Tim is without; just come from his uncle Tregegle's, at Menegizy, in Cornwall. Tim is an honest lad—do so, do so—[*Exit* JENK.]—Well, Mr Hartop, and so we have a peace, lack-a-day; long-looked-for come at last. But pray, Mr Hartop, how many newspapers may you have printed in a-week?

Har. About an hundred and fifty, sir Gregory.

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! and all full, I reckon; full as an egg; nothing but news! Well, well, I shall go to London one of these days. A hundred and fifty? Wonderful! And pray, now, which do you reckon the best?

Har. Oh, sir Gregory, they are various in their excellencies, as their uses. If you are inclined to blacken, by a couple of lines, the reputation of a neighbour, you may do it for two shillings in one paper: if you are displaced or disappointed of a place, a triplet against the ministry will be always well received at the head of another; and then, as a paper of morning amusement, you have the Fool.

Sir Gre. The Fool? good lack! and pray who and what may that same fool be?

Har. Why, sir Gregory, the author has artfully assumed that habit, like the royal jesters of old, to level his satire with more security to himself, and severity to others.

Sir Gre. May be so, may be so! The Fool! ha, ha, ha! Well enough; a queer dog, and no fool, I warrant you. Killigrew; ah, I have heard my grandfather talk much of that same Killigrew, and no fool. But what's all this to news, Mr Hartop? Who gives us the best account of the king of Spain, and the queen of Hungary, and those great folks? Come now, you could give us a little news, if you would; come now—snug! —nobody by. Good now, do; come, ever so little.

Har. Why, as you so largely contribute to the support of the government, it is but fair you should know what they are about. We are at present in a treaty with the pope.

Sir Gre. With the pope! Wonderful! Good now, good now! How, how!

Har. We are to yield him up a large track of the Terra-incognita, together with both the Needles, Scilly-rocks, and the Lizard-point, on condition that the pretender has the government of Laputa, and the bishop of Greenland succeeds to St Peter's chair; he being, you know, a protestant, when possessed of the pontificals, issues out a bull, commanding all catholics to be of his religion: they, deeming the pope infallible, follow his directions; and then, sir Gregory, we are all of one mind.

Sir Gre. Good lack, good lack! Rare news, rare news, rare news! Ten millions of thanks, Mr Hartop. But might not I just hint this to Mr Soakum, our vicar? 'twould rejoice his heart.

Har. O fie, by no means!

Sir Gre. Only a line—a little hint—do now?

Har. Well, sir, it is difficult for me to refuse you any thing,

Sir Gre. Ten thousand thanks. Good now! the pope—Wonderful! I'll minute it down—Both the Needles?

Har. Ay, both.

Sir Gre. Good now; I'll minute it—the Lizard-point—both the Needles—Scilly-rocks—bishop of Greenland—St Peter's chair—Why then, when this is finished, we may chance to attack the great Turk, and have holy wars again, Mr Hartop.

Har. That's part of the scheme.

Sir Gre. Ah, good now! You see I have a head! Politics have been my study many a day. Ah, if I had been in London to improve by the newspapers! They tell me Dr Drybones is to succeed to the bishoprick of Wisper?

Har. No; Doctor——

Sir Gre. Indeed! I was told by my landlord at Ross, that it was between him and the dean of——

Har. To my knowledge.

Sir Gre. Nay, you know best, to be sure. If it should——Hush! here's Mr Jenkins and son Tim—mum!—Mr Jenkins does not know any thing about the treaty with the pope?

Har. Not a word.

Sir Gre. Mum!

Enter TIM *and* MR JENKINS.

Jen. Mr Timothy is almost grown out of knowledge, sir Gregory.

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! ay, ay; Ill weeds grow a-pace. Son Tim, Mr Hartop; a great man, child! Mr Hartop, son Tim.

Har. Sir, I shall be always glad to know every branch that springs from so valuable a trunk as sir Gregory Gazette.

Sir Gre. May be so. Wonderful! ay, ay.

Har. Sir, I am glad to see you in Herefordshire—Have you been long from Cornwall?

Tim. Ay, sir; a matter of four weeks or a month, more or less.

Sir Gre. Well said, Tim! Ay, ay, ask Tim any questions, he can answer for himself. Tim, tell Mr Hartop all the news about the elections, and the tinners, and the tides, and the roads, and the pilchards. I want a few words with Mr Jenkins.

Har. You have been so long absent from your native country, that you have almost forgot it.

Tim. Yes sure. I ha' been at uncle Tregegle's a matter of twelve or a dozen year, more or less.

Har. Then I reckon you were quite impatient to see your papa and mamma?

Tim. No sure, not I. Father sent for me to

uncle.—Sure Menegizy is a choice place! and I could a staid there all my born days, more or less.

Har. Pray, sir, what were your amusements?

Tim. Nan! what d'ye say?

Har. How did you divert yourself?

Tim. Oh, we ha' pastimes enow there;—we ha' bull-baiting, and cock-fighting, and fishing, and hunting, and hurling, and wrestling.

Har. The two last are sports, for which that country is very remarkable;—in those, I presume, you are very expert?

Tim. Nan! What?

Har. I say you are a good wrestler.

Tim. Oh, yes sure, I can wrestle well enow:—but we don't wrestle after your fashion; we ha' no tripping, fath and sole! we go all upon close hugs, or the flying mare. Will you try a fall, master?—I won't hurt you, fath and sole.

Har. We had as good not venture though. But have you left in Cornwall nothing that you regret the loss of more than hurling and wrestling?

Tim. Nan! What?

Har. No favourite she!

Tim. Arra, I coupled Favourite and Jowler together, and sure they tugged it all the way up. Part with Favourite! no, I thank you for nothing. You must know I nursed Favourite myself: uncle's huntsman was going to Mill-pond to drown all Music's puppies; so I saved she. But fath, I'll tell you a comical story; at Lanston, they both broke loose, and eat a whole loin-a'-veal, and a leg of beef: Crist! How landlord swear-ed! fath the poor fellow was almost amazed; it made me die wi' laughing. But how came you to know about our Favourite?

Har. A circumstance so material to his son, could not escape the knowledge of sir Gregory Gazette's friends. But here you mistook me a little, 'Squire Tim; I meant whether your affections were not settled upon some pretty girl.—Has not some Cornish lass caught your heart?

Tim. Hush! cod, the old man will hear; jog a tiny bit this way—won't a' tell father?

Har. Upon my honour!

Tim. Why then, I'll tell you the whole story more or less. Do you know Mally Pengrouse?

Har. I am not so happy.

Tim. She's uncle's milk-maid;—she's as handsome, Lord! her face all red and white, like the inside of a shoulder of mutton; so I made love to our Mally: and just, fath, as I had got her good-will to run away to Exeter and be married, uncle found it out, and sent word to father, and father sent for me home—but I don't love her a bit the worse for that. But i'cod, if you tell father, he'll knock my brains out; for he says, I'll disparage the family, and mother's as mad as a March hare about it—so father and mother ha' brought me to be married to some young body in these parts.

Har. What, is my lady here?

Tim. No, sure; dame Winnifred, as father calls her, could not come along.

Har. I am sorry for that; I have the honour to be a distant relation of her ladyship's.

Tim. Like enough, fath!—she's a-kin to half the world, I think. But don't you say a word to father about Mally Pengrouse. Hush!

Jen. Mr Hartop, sir Gregory will be amongst us some time—he is going with his son to sir Penurious Trifle's——there is a kind of a treaty of marriage on foot between Miss Sukey Trifle and Mr Timothy.

Har. The devil! [*Apart.*] I shall be glad of every circumstance that can make me better acquainted with sir Gregory.

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! may be so, may be so!

Tim. Father, sure the gentleman says as how mother and he are a-kin!

Sir Gre. Wonderful! Lack-a-day, lack-a-day! how, how? I am proud to—but how, Mr Hartop, how?

Har. Why, sir, a cousin-german of my aunt's first husband intermarried with a distant relation of a collateral branch by the mother's side, the Apprices of Lantrindon; and we have ever since quartered in a 'scutcheon of pretence the three goat's tails rampant, divided by a cheveron, field-argent; with a leek pendant in the dexter point, to distinguish the second house.

Sir Gre. Wonderful! wonderful! nearly, nearly related! Good now, good now, if dame Winnifred was here, she'd make them all out with a wet finger—but they are above me. Prithee, Tim, good now, see after the horses—and, d'ye hear? try if you can get any newspapers.

Tim. Yes, father—But, cousin what-d'ye-call-um, not a word about Mally Pengrouse!

Har. Mum! [*Exit* TIM.

Sir Gre. Good now, that boy will make some mistake about the horses now! I'll go myself. Good now, no farther, cousin; if you please, no ceremony—A hundred and fifty newspapers a week! the Fool! ha, ha, ha! wonderful! an odd dog! [*Exit* SIR GREGORY.

Jen. So, Jack, here's a fresh spoke in your wheel.

Har. This is a cursed cross incident!

Jen. Well, but something must be done to frustrate the scheme of your new cousin's. Can you think of nothing?

Har. I have been hammering: pray, are the two knights intimate? are they well acquainted with each other's person?

Jen. Faith, I can't tell; but we may soon know.

Har. Could you recommend me a good spirited girl, who has humour and compliance to follow a few directions, and understanding

enough to barter a little inclination for 3000l. a-year and a fool?

Jen. In part I guess your design; the man's daughter of the house is a good lively lass, has a fortune to make, and no reputation to lose: I'll call her—Jenny!—but the enemy's at hand—— I'll withdraw and prepare Jenny. When the worshipful family are retired, I'll introduce the wench.

[*Exit* JENKINS.

Enter SIR GREGORY *and* TIM.

Sir Gre. Pray, now, cousin, are you in friendship with sir Penurious Trifle?

Har. I have the honour, sir, of that gentleman's acquaintance.

Sir Gre. May be so, may be so! but, lack-a-day, cousin, is he such a miser as folks say? Good now, they tell me we shall hardly have necessaries for ourselves and horses at Gripe-hall; but as you are a relation, you should, good now, know the affairs of the family. Here's sir Penurious's letter; here, cousin.

Har. 'Your overture I receive with pleasure, and should be glad to meet you in Shropshire'—I fancy, from a thorough knowledge of sir Penurious's disposition, and by what I can collect from the contents of that letter, he would be much better pleased to meet you here than at his own house.

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day, may be so!—a strange man! wonderful! But, good now, cousin, what must we do?

Har. I this morning paid sir Penurious a visit, and if you'll honour me with your commands, I'll——

Sir Gre. Wonderful! to-day!——good now, that's lucky! cousin, you are very kind. Good now, I'll send a letter, Tim, by cousin Hartop.

Har. A letter from so old an acquaintance, and upon so happy an occasion, will secure me a favourable reception.

Sir Gre. Good lack, good lack, an old acquaintance, indeed, cousin Hartop! we were at Hereford 'size together—let's see, wonderful, how long ago!—'twas while I was courting Dame Winny, the year before I married—Good now, how long? let's see—that year the hackney stable was built, and Peter Ugly, the blind pad, fell into a saw-pit.

Tim. Mother says, father and she was married the first of April in the year ten; and I knows 'tis thereabout, for I am two and thirty; and brother Jeremy, and Roger, and Gregory, and sister Nelly, were born before I.

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! how time wears away! wonderful! thirty-eight years ago, Tim! I could not have thought it. But come in, let's set about the letter. But, pray, cousin, what diversions, good now, are going forward in London?

Har. Oh, sir, we are in no distress for amusement; we have plays, balls, puppet-shews, masquerades, bull-baitings, boxings, burlettas, routs, drums, and a thousand others. But I am in haste for your epistle, sir Gregory.

Sir Gre. Cousin, your servant.

[*Exeunt* SIR GREGORY *and* TIMOTHY.

Har. I am your most obedient—Thus far our scheme succeeds: and if Jenkins's girl can assume the aukward pertness of the daughter, with as much success as I can imitate the spirited folly of sir Penurious the father, I don't despair of a happy catastrophe.

Enter JENNY.

Jenny. Sir, Mr Jenkins——

Har. Oh, child, your instructions shall be administered within.

Jenny. Mr Jenkins has opened your design, and I am ready and able to execute my part.

Har. My dear, I have not the least doubt of either your inclination or ability—But, pox take this old fellow! what in the devil's name can bring him back? Scour, Jenny.

Enter SIR GREGORY.

Sir Gre. Cousin, I beg pardon; but I have a favour to beg—Good now, could not you make interest at some coffee-house in London, to buy, for a small matter, the old books of newspapers, and send them into the country to me? They would pass away the time rarely in a rainy day—

Har. I'll send you a cart-load.

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! Ten thousand thanks!—You are a cousin indeed. But, pray, cousin, let us, good now, see some of the works of that same fool?

Har. I'll send you them all; but a——

Sir Gre. What, all?—Lack-a-day, that's kind, cousin! The Terra-incognita—both the Needles—a great deal of that! But what bishop is to be pope?

Har. Zounds, sir, I am in haste for your letter—When I return, ask as many questions——

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! that's true—I'll in, and about it——But, cousin, the pope is not to have Gibraltar?

Har. No, no; damn it, no! As none but the Fool could say it, so none but idiots would believe him—Pray, sir Gregory——

Sir Gre. Well, well, cousin; Lack-a-day! you are so—but pray——

Har. Damn your praying! If you don't finish your letter immediately, you may carry it yourself.

Sir Gre. Well, well, cousin! Lack-a-day, you are in such a—good now, I go, I go!

Har. But if the truth should be discovered, I shall be inevitably disappointed.

Sir Gre. But, cousin, are Scilly rocks——

Har. I wish they were in your guts with all my heart! I must quit the field, I find.
[*Exit* HARTOP.

Sir Gre. Wonderful! good now, good now! a passionate man! Lack-a-day, I am glad the pope is not to have Gibraltar though. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—SIR GREGORY, *and* TIM *reading news to him, discovered.*

Tim. CONSTANTINOPLE, N. S. Nov. 15, the Grand Seignior——

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day! good now, Tim, the politics, child: and read the stars, and the dashes, and the blanks, as I taught you, Tim.

Tim. Yes, father—We can assure our readers, that the D—dash is to go to F blank: and that a certain noble L—is to resign his p—e in the t——y in order to make room for the two three stars.

Sir Gre. Wonderful! good now, good now! great news, Tim! Ah, I knew the two three stars would come in play one time or other. This London Evening knows more than any of them. Well, child, well.

Tim. From the D. J.

Sir Gre. Ay, that's the Dublin Journal. Go on, Tim.

Tim. Last Saturday, a gang of highwaymen broke into an empty house on Ormond quay, and stripped it of all the furniture.

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day, wonderful! To what a height these rogues are grown!

Tim. The way to Mr Keith's chapel, is turn off your———

Sir Gre. Psha! skip that, Tim; I know that road as well as the doctor: 'tis in every time.

Tim. J. Ward, at the Cat and Gridiron, Petticoat lane, makes tabby all over for people inclined to be crooked; and if he was to have the universal world for making a pair of stays, he could not put better stuff in them———

Sir Gre. Good now; where's that, Tim?

Tim. At the Cat and Gridiron, father.

Sir Gre. I'll minute that: All my lady Isard's children, good now, are inclined to be crooked.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Sir, Mr Jenkins begs to speak with you.

Sir Gre. Good now; desire him to walk in.

Enter JENKINS.

Jenk. I thought it might not be improper to prepare you for a visit from sir Penurious Trifle. I saw him and his daughter alight at the apothecary's above.

Sir Gre. What, they are come? Wonderful! Very kind, very kind, very kind, indeed, Mr—— Come, Tim, settle my cravat; good now, let's be a little decent.—Remember your best bow to your mistress, Tim.

Tim. Yes, father! but must not I kiss Miss Suck?

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day, ay, ay. Pray, is cousin Hartop come along?

Jenk. I have not seen him; but I fancy I had better introduce my neighbours.

Sir Gre. Good now, would you be so kind? [*Exit* JENKINS.] Stand behind me, Tim—Pull down your ruffles, child.

Tim. But, father, won't Miss Suck think me bold, if I kiss her chops the first time?

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day! no, Tim, no. Faint heart never won fair lady. Ha, Tim, had you but seen me attack dame Winny! But times aren't as they were. Good now, we were another kind of folks in those days; stout hearty smacks, that would ha' made your mouth water again; and the mark stood upon the pouting lip, like the print upon a pound of butter. But the master-misses of the present age go, lack-a-day, as gingerly about it, as if they were afraid to fill their mouths with the paint upon their mistresses' cheeks. Ah, the days I have seen!

Tim. Nay, father, I warrant, if that's all, I kiss her hearty enow, fath and sole!

Sir Gre. Hush, Tim, hush! Stand behind me, child.

Enter HARTOP *as* SIR PENURIOUS TRIFLE, *and* JENNY *as* MISS SUKEY, *and* JENKINS.

Sir Gre. Sir Penurious, I am overjoyed!—— Good now!

Har. Sir Gregory, I kiss your hand. My daughter Suck.

Sir Gre. Wonderful!—Miss, I am proud to —Son Tim—Sir Penurious—Best bow, child—Miss Suck—

Tim. An't that right, father? [*Kisses her.*

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! I am glad to see you look so well. You keep your own, sir Penurious.

Har. Ay, ay, stout enough, sir Gregory; stout enough, brother knight; hearty as an oak. Hey, Dick? Gad, now I talk of an oak, I'll tell you a story of an oak. It will make you die with laughing. Hey, you Dick, you have heard it; shall I tell it sir Gregory?

Jen. Though I have heard it so often, yet there is something so engaging in your manner of telling a story, that it always appears new.

Sir Gre. Wonderful! good now, good now;

I love a comical story. Pray, sir Penurious, let's have it.—Mind, Tim; mind, child.

Tim. Yes, father; fath and sole, I love a choice story to my heart's blood!

Har. You, knight, I was at Bath last summer ——a water that people drink when they are ill. You have heard of the bath, Dick? Hey, you?

Tim. Yes, fath, I know Bath; I was there in my way up.

Sir Gre. Hush, Tim; good now, hush!

Har. There's a coffee-house, you——a place where people drink coffee and tea, and read the news.

Sir Gre. Pray, sir Penurious, how many papers may they take in?

Har. Psha! damn the news! mind the story.

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! a hasty man, Tim!

Har. Pox take you both! I have lost the story—Where did I leave off? Hey—you Dick.

Tim. About coffee and tea.

Har. Right, right! True, true! So, ecod, you knight, I used to breakfast at this coffee-house every morning; it cost me eight-pence, though, and I had always a breakfast at home—no matter for that, though! there I breakfasted, you, Dick, ecod, at the same table with lord Tom Truewit——You have heard of Truewit, you knight? a droll dog! You, Dick, he told us the story, and made us die with laughing. You have heard of Charles II. you knight; he was son of Charles I. king here, in England, that was beheaded by Oliver Cromwell: So, what does Charles I. you knight, do? But he fights Noll at Worcester, a town you have heard of, not far off: but all would not do, you: ecod, Noll made him scamper, made him run, take to his heels, you knight. Truewit told us the story, made us die with laughing. I always breakfasted at the coffee-house; it cost me eightpence, though I had a breakfast at home—So what does Charles do, but hid himself in an oak, an oak-tree, you, in a wood, called Boscobel, from two Italian words, Bosco Bello, a fine wood, you; and off he marches: but old Noll would not let him come home; no, says he, you don't come here. Lord Tom told us the story; made us die with laughing; it cost me eightpence, though I had a breakfast at home. So, you knight, when Noll died, Monk there, you, afterwards Albemarle, in the north, brought him back. So, you, the cavaliers, you have heard of them? they were friends to the Stuarts. What did they do, ecod, you Dick! But they put up Charles in a sign, the royal oak; you have seen such signs at country ale-houses: so, ecod, you, what does a puritan do?—the puritans were friends to Noll—but he puts up the sign of an owl in the ivy-bush, and underneath he writes, 'This is not the royal oak.' You have seen writings under signs, you knight? Upon this, says the royalists, ecod, this must not be: so, you, what do they do, but, ecod, they prosecuted the poor puritan; but they made him change his sign, though. And you, Dick, how d'ye think they changed it? Ecod, he puts up the royal oak, and underneath he writes, 'This is not the owl in the ivy-bush.' It made us all die with laughing. Lord Tom told the story. I always breakfasted at the coffee-house, though it cost me eightpence, and I had a breakfast at home; hey, you knight? What, Dick, hey?

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! Wonderful!

Tim. A choice tale, fath!

Jen. Oh, sir Penurious is a most entertaining companion, that must be allowed.

Sir Gre. Good now, ay, ay, a merry man! But, lack-a-day, would not the young lady choose a little refreshment after her ride? Some tea, or some——

Har. Hey, you knight! No, no; we intend to dine with thee, man. Well, you, Tim, what dost think of thy father-in-law that is to be, hey? A jolly cock, you, Tim; hey, Dick? But, prithee, boy, what dost do with all this tawdry tinsel on? that hat and waistcoat? trash, knight, trash! more in thy pocket, and less in thy clothes; hey, you Dick? ecod, you knight, I'll make you laugh: I went to London, you, Dick, last year, to call in a mortgage; and what does me, I, Dick, but take a trip to a coffee-house in St Martin's-lane; in comes a French fellow forty times as fine as Tim, with his muff and parlevous, and his Frances; and his head, you knight, as white with powder, ecod, you, as a twelfth cake: and who the devil d'ye think, Dick, this might be, hey, you knight?

Sir Gre. Good now, an ambassador, to be sure.

Har. Ecod, you knight, nor better nor worse than Mynheer Vancaper, a Dutch figure-dancer at the opera house in the Haymarket.

Sir Gre. Wonderful! good now, good now!

Har. Psha! Pox, prithee, Tim, nobody dresses now; all plain: look at me, knight; I am in the tip of the mode; now am I in full dress; hey, Dick?

Jen. You, sir, don't want the aid of dress; but in Mr Gazette, a little regard to that particular is but a necessary compliment to his mistress.

Har. Stuff, Dick, stuff! my daughter, knight, has had otherguess breeding. Hey, you, Suck, come forward. Plain as a pike-staff, knight; all as nature made her; hey, Tim? no flams. Prithee, Tim, off with thy lace, and burn it; 'twill help to buy the licence; she'll not like thee a bit the better for that; hey, Suck? but you, knight; ecod, Dick, a toast and tankard would not be amiss after our walk; hey, you?

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! What you will, sir Penurious.

Har. Ecod, that's hearty, you! but we won't part the young couple, hey? I'll send Suck some bread and cheese in; hey, knight? at her,

Tim. Come, Dick; come, you knight. Did I ever tell you my courtship, hey, Dick? 'twill make you laugh.

Jen. Not, as I remember.

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day, let's have it.

Har. You know my wife was blind, you, knight!

Sir Gre. Good now, wonderful! not I.

Har. Blind as a beetle when I married her, knight; hey, Dick? she was drowned in our orchard. Maid Bess, knight, went to market, you, Dick; and wife rambled into the orchard, and souse dropped into the fish-pond. We found her out next day; but she was dead as a herring; no help for that, Dick; buried her, though, hey, you? She was only daughter to sir Tristram Muckworm, you; rich enough, you, hey? Ecod, you, what does she do, you, but she falls in love with young Sleek, her father's chaplain, hey, you? Upon that, what does me, I, but slips on domine's robes, you, passed myself upon her for him, and we were tacked together, you, knight, hey, ecod? though I believe she never liked me: but what signifies that, hey, Dick? she was rich, you. But come, let's leave the children together.

Sir Gre. Sir, I wait on you.

Har. Nay, pray——

Sir Gre. Good now, good now, 'tis impossible.

Har. Pox of ceremony! You, Dick, hey? Ecod, knight, I'll tell you a story. One of our ambassadors in France, you, a devilish polite fellow reckoned, Dick; ecod, you, what does the king of France do, but, says he, I'll try the manners of this fine gentleman: so, knight, going into a coach, together, the king would have my lord go first: oh, an't please your majesty, I can't indeed; you, hey, Dick? Upon which, what does me, the king, but he takes his arm thus, you, Dick; am I king of France, or you? Is it my coach, or yours? And so pushes him in thus, hey, Dick?

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! he, he, he!

Har. Ecod, Dick, I believe I have made a mistake here; I should have gone in first; hey, Dick? Knight, ecod, you, beg pardon. Yes; your coach, not mine; your house, not mine; hey, knight?

Sir Gre. Wonderful! A merry man, Mr Jenkins.

[*Exeunt the two knights and* JEN.

Tim. Father and cousin are gone, fath and sole!

Jenny. I fancy my lover is a little puzzled how to begin.

Tim. How—fath and sole, I don't know what to say.—How d'ye do, Miss Suck!

Jenny. Pretty well, thank you.

Tim. You have had a choice walk. 'Tis a rare day, fath and sole!

Jenny. Yes; the day's well enough.

Tim. Is your house a good way off here?

Jenny. Dree or vour mile.

Tim. That's a good long walk, fath!

Jenny. I make nothing of it, and back again.

Tim. Like enow. [*Whistles.*

Jenny. [*Sings.*

Tim. You have a rare pipe of your own, miss.

Jenny. I can sing loud enough, if I have a mind; but father don't love singing.

Tim. Like enow. [*Whistles.*

Jenny. And I an't overfond of whistling.

Tim. Hey! ay, like enow: and I am a bitter bad singer.

Jenny. Hey! ay, like enough.

Tim. Pray, Miss Suck, did ever any body make love to you before?

Jenny. Before when?

Tim. Before now.

Jenny. What if I won't tell you?

Tim. Why, then, you must let it alone, fath and sole.

Jenny. Like enough.

Tim. Pray, Miss Suck, did your father tell you any thing?

Jenny. About what?

Tim. About I.

Jenny. What should a tell?

Tim. Tell! Why, as how I and father was come a-wooing.

Jenny. Who?

Tim. Why, you. Could you like me for a sweetheart, Miss Suck?

Jenny. I don't know.

Tim. Mayhap, somebody may ha' got your good-will already?

Jenny. And what then?

Tim. Then? Hey, I don't know. But if you could fancy me——

Jenny. For what?

Tim. For your true lover—

Jenny. Well, what then?

Tim. Then! Hey! Why, fath, we may chance to be married, if the old folks agree together.

Jenny. And suppose I won't be married to you?

Tim. Nay, Miss Suck, I can't help it, fath and sole. But father and mother bid me come a-courting; and if you won't ha' me, I'll tell father so.

Jenny. You are in a woundy hurry, methinks.

Tim. Not I, fath! You may stay as long as—

Enter Waiter.

Wait. There's a woman without wants to speak with Mr Timothy Gazette.

Tim. That's I. I am glad on't. Well, Miss Suck, your servant. You'll think about it; and let's know your mind when I come back. Cod, I don't care whether she likes me or no. I don't like her half so well as Mally Pengrouse—— Well, your servant, Miss Suck.

[*Exit* TIM.

Jenny. Was there ever such an unlicked cub! I don't think his fortune a sufficient reward for sacrificing my person to such a booby; but as he has money enough, it shall go hard but I please myself: I fear I was a little too backward with my gentleman; but, however, a favourable answer to his last question will soon settle matters.

Enter JENKINS.

Jen. Now, Jenny, what news, child? Are things fixed? are you ready for the nuptial knot?

Jenny. We are in a fair way: I thought to have quickened my swain's advances by a little affected coyness, but the trap would not take: I expect him back in a minute, and then leave it to my management.

Jen. Where is he gone?

Jenny. The drawer called him to some woman.

Jen. Woman! he neither knows, nor is known, by any body here. What can this mean? No counter-plot? But, pox, that's impossible! You have not blabbed, Jenny?

Jenny. My interest would prevent me.

Jen. Upon that security any woman may, I think, be trusted. I must after him, though.

[*Exit* JEN.

Jenny. I know the time when Jenkins would not have left me so hastily. Heigh ho!

Enter HARTOP *as* SIR PENURIOUS, *and* SIR GREGORY GAZETTE.

Har. And so, you knight, says he———you know, knight, what low dogs the ministers were, then: how does your pot—a pot, you, that they put over the fire to boil broth and meat in—you have seen a pot, you knight? how does your pot boil these troublesome times? hey you! Ecod, my lord, says he, I don't know, I seldom go into my kitchen. A kitchen, you knight, is a place where they dress victuals, roast and boil, and so forth: Ecod, says he, I seldom go into the kitchen—But I suppose, the scum is uppermost still! Hey, you knight! what, ecod, hey? But where's your son, sir Gregory?

Sir Gre. Good now, good now——Where is Tim, Miss Sukey? lack-a-day! what is become of Tim?

Jenny. Gone out a tiny bit; he'll be here presently.

Sir Gre. Wonderful! good now, good now! Well, and how, Miss Sukey———has Tim? has he, well? and what, you have—wonderful!

Enter a Servant, with a letter.

Ser. Sir, I was commanded to deliver this into your own hands, by Mr Jenkins.

Har. Hey, you! what, a letter? ecod so!——nswer, you? hey?

Ser. None, sir.

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day, sir Penurious is busy Well, miss, and did Tim do the thing? did he please you? Come now, tell us the whole story: wonderful! rare news for dame Winny! ha, Tim's father's own son! But come, whisper—ay.

Har. 'I have only time to tell you, that your scheme is blasted: this instant I encountered Mrs Penelope Trifle, with her niece; they will soon be with you.' So, then, all is over; but let us see what expedition will do———Well, you knight, hey? what, have they settled?—Is the girl willing?

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! right as my leg! ah, Tim, little did I think—But, lack-a-day, I wonder where the boy is! let us seek him.

Har. Agreed, you knight; hey, come.

Enter JENKINS.

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day, here's Mr Jenkins.——Good now, have you seen Tim?

Jen. Your curiosity shall be immediately satisfied; but I must first have a word with sir Penurious.

Har. Well you!——what, hey?—any news, Dick?

Jen. Better than you could hope; your rival is disposed of.

Har. Disposed of! how?

Jen. Married by this time, you rogue!—The woman that wanted him was no other than Mally Pengrouse, who trudged it up all the way after him, as Tim says: I have recommended them to my chaplain, and before this the business is done.

Har. Bravissimo, you rogue! but how shall *I* get off with the knight?

Jen. Nay, that must be your contrivance.

Har. I have it—Suppose I was to own the whole design to sir Gregory, as our plan has not succeeded with his son; and, as he seems to have a tolerable regard for me, it is possible he may assist my scheme on sir Penurious.

Jen. 'Tis worth trying, however. But he comes.

Sir Gre. Well, good now, Mr Jenkins, have you seen Tim? I can't think where the boy—

Har. 'Tis now time, sir Gregory, to set you clear with respect to some particulars. I am no longer sir Penurious Trifle, but your friend and relation, Jack Hartop.

Sir Gre. Wonderful! good now, good now, cousin Hartop! as I am a living man—hey——Well, but, good now! how, Mr Jenkins, hey?

Jen. The story, sir Gregory, is rather too long to tell you now: but in two words—my friend Hartop has very long had a passion for Miss Trifle, and was apprehensive your son's application would destroy his views—which in order to defeat, he assumed the character of sir Penurious; but he is so captivated with your integrity

and friendship, that he rather chooses to forego his own interest, than interrupt the happiness of your son.

Sir Gre. Wonderful! good now, good now, that is kind! who could have thought it, cousin Hartop? lack-a-day! Well, but where's Tim? hey, good now! and who are you?

Jen. This, sir, is Jenny, the handmaid of the house.

Sir Gre. Wonderful! a pestilent hussy!—Ah, Hartop, you are a wag! a pize of your pots, and your royal oaks! lack-a-day, who could ha' thought———ah, Jenny, you're a—But where's Tim?

Enter SIR GREGORY'S *servant*

Ser. Wounds, master! never stir alive if master Tim has na gone and married Mally Pengrouse!

Sir Gre. Wonderful! how, sirrah, how! good now, good now, cousin Hartop—Mally Pengrouse! Who the dickens is she?

Ser. Master Timothy's sweetheart in Cornwall.

Sir Gre. And how came she here? lack-a-day, cousin!

Ser. She tramped it up after master. Master Timothy is without, and says as how they be married. I wanted him to come in, but he's afraid you'll knock'n down.

Sir Gre. Knock'n down! Good now, let me come at him! I'll—ah, rogue! Lack-a-day, cousin, show me where he is! I'll——

Har. Moderate your fury, good sir Gregory; consider, it is an evil without a remedy.

Sir Gre. But what will Dame Winny say? Good now, such a disparagement to—and, then, what will sir Penurious say? lack-a-day, I am almost distracted! And you, you lubberly dog! why did not you—I'll—ah, cousin Hartop, cousin Hartop! good now, good now!

Har. Dear sir, be calm; this is no such surprising matter: we have such instances in the newspapers every day.

Sir Gre. Good now! no cousin, no.

Har. Indeed, sir Gregory, it was but last week that lord Lofty's son married his mother's maid; and lady Betty Forward run away, not a month ago, with her uncle's butler.

Sir Gre. Wonderful! what, in the news?—Good now, that's some comfort, however; but what will sir Penurious——

Har. As to that, leave him to me; I have a project to prevent his laughing at you, I'll warrant.

Sir Gre. But how?——how, cousin Hartop, how?

Har. Sir Gregory, do you think me your friend?

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day! ay, cousin, ay.

Har. And would you, in return, serve me in a circumstance that can't injure yourself?

Sir Gre. Good now, to be sure, cousin.

Har. Will you, then, permit me to assume the figure of your son, and so pay my addresses to Miss Trifle? I was pretty happy in the imitation of her father; and if I could impose upon your sagacity, I shall find less difficulty with your brother knight.

Sir Gre. Good now, Tim! ah, you could not touch Tim.

Har. I warrant you. But, see, the young gentleman.

Enter TIM.

Sir Gre. Ah, Tim, Tim! little did I——Good now, good now!

Tim. I could not help it now, fath and sole: but if you'll forgive me this time, I'll never do so no more.

Sir Gre. Well, well, if thee can'st forgive thyself, I can forgive thee; but thank my cousin Hartop.

Har. Oh, sir! If you are satisfied, I am rewarded. I wish you joy; joy to you, child!

Tim. Thanks, cousin Hartop.

Enter Waiter.

Wait. Sir, Mrs Penelope Trifle, with her niece, being come to town, and hearing your worship was in the house, would be glad to pay you their compliments.

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day! wonderful! here we are all topsy-turvey again! What can be done now, cousin Hartop?

Har. Dick! show the ladies in here; but delay them a little. The luckiest incident in the world, sir Gregory! If you'll be kind enough to lend Jenkins your dress, and Master Timothy will lend me his, I'll make up matters in a moment.

Sir Gre. Ay, ay, cousin.

Tim. Fath and sole, you shall have mine direc———

Har. No, no! Step into the next room a minute, sir Gregory.

Sir Gre. Aye, aye, where you will.

Tim. Faith, here will be choice sport.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter MRS PENELOPE *and* SUCK, *with Waiter.*

Wait. The gentleman will wait on you presently. Would you choose any refreshment?

Suck. A draught of ale, friend, for I am main dry.

Mrs Pen. Fie, fie, niece! is that liquor for a young lady? Don't disparage your family and breeding. The person is to be born that ever saw me touch any thing stronger than water till I was three-and twenty.

Suck. Troth, aunt, that is so long ago, that I think there's few people alive who can remember what you did, then.

Mrs Pen. How, gillflirt? none of your fleers! I am glad here's a husband coming that will take you down: Your tantrums! You are grown too headstrong and robust for me.

Suck. Gad, I believe you would be glad to be taken down the same way!

Mrs Pen. Oh! you are a pert————But, see, your lover approaches. Now, Sukey, be careful, child: None of your————

Enter JENKINS, *as* SIR GREGORY, *and* HARTOP *as* TIM.

Jen. Lack-a-day, lady! I rejoice to see you. Wonderful! and your niece! Tim, the ladies.

Har. Your servant, mistress! I am glad to see you, Miss Suck. [*Salutes her.*] Fath and sole, mistress, Suck's a fine young woman, more or less!

Suck. Yes, I am well enough, I believe.

Jen. But, lady, where's my brother Trifle? where is sir Penurious?

Suck. Father's at home, in expectation of you; and aunt and I be come to town to make preparations.

Jen. Ay, wonderful! Pray, lady, shall I, good now! crave a word in private? Tim, will you and your sweetheart draw back a little?

Har. Yes, father. Come, miss, will you jog a tiny bit this way?

Suck. With all my heart.

Jen. There is, lady, a wonderful affair has happened, good now! Son Tim has fallen in love with a young woman at his uncle's, and 'tis partly to prevent bad consequences, that I am, lack-a day! so hasty to match him: and one of my men, good now! tells me that he has seen the wench since we have been in town; she has followed us here, sure as a gun, lady! if Tim sees the girl, he'll never marry your niece.

Mrs Pen. It is, indeed, sir Gregory Gazette, a most critical conjuncture, and requires the most mature deliberation.

Jen. Deliberation! lack-a-day, lady, whilst we deliberate the boy will be lost.

Mrs Pen. Why, sir Gregory Gazette, what operations can we determine upon?

Jen. Lack-a-day! I know but one.

Mrs Pen. Administer your proposition, sir Gregory Gazette: you will have my concurrence, sir, in any thing that does not derogate from the regulations of conduct; for it would be most preposterous in one of my character, to deviate from the strictest attention.

Jen. Lack-a-day, lady!——no such matter is wanted. But, good now! could not we tack the young couple together directly? your brother and I have already agreed.

Mrs Pen. Are the previous preliminaries settled, sir Gregory Gazette?

Jen. Good now! as firm as a rock, lady.

Mrs Pen. Why, then, to preserve your son, and accomplish the union between our families, I have no objections to the acceleration of their nuptials, provided the child is inclined, and a minister may be procured.

Jen. Wonderful! you are very good, good now! there has been one match already in the house to-day: we may have the same parson. Here, Tim!——and young gentlewoman! Well, miss! wonderful, and how? has Tim? hey, boy! Is not a miss a fine young lady?

Har. Faith and sole, father, miss is a charming young woman; all red and white, like Mally—Hum!

Jen. Hush, Tim! Well, and miss, how does my boy? he's an honest hearty lad? Has he, good now! had the art? How d'ye like him, young gentlewoman?

Suck. Like'n! well enough, I think.

Jen. Why, then, miss, with your leave, your aunt and I, here, have agreed, if you are willing, to have the wedding over directly.

Suck. Gad! with all my heart. Ask the young man.

Har. Faith and sole, just as you please; to-day, to-morrow, or when you will, more or less.

Jen. Good now, good now! then, get you in there; there you will find one to do your business: wonderful! matters will soon be managed within. Well, lady, this was, good now, so kind! Lack-a-day! I verily believe if dame Winny was dead, that I should be glad to lead up such another dance with you, lady.

Mrs Pen. You are, sir, something too precipitate: Nor would there, did circumstances concur, as you insinuate, be so absolute a certitude, that I, who have rejected so many matches, should instantaneously succumb.

Jen. Lack-a-day, lady, good now! I————

Mrs Pen. No, sir; I would have you instructed, that had not Penelope Trifle made irrefragable resolutions, she need not so long have preserved her family surname.

Jen. Wonderful! why, I was only————

Mrs Pen. Nor has the title of lady Gazette such resplendent charms, or such bewitching allurements, as to throw me at once into the arms of sir Gregory.

Jen. Good now! who says————

Mrs Pen. Could wealth, beauty, or titles superior to, perhaps————

Enter SIR GREGORY, ROGER, *and* TIM.

Tim. Yes, indeed, father; Mr Hartop knew on't as well as I, and Mr Jenkins got us a parson.

Sir Gre. Good now, good now! a rare couple of friends! But I'll be even with them! I'll marr their market! Master Jenkins, you have fobbed me finely.

Jen. Lack-a-day, what's the matter now?

Sir Gre. Come, come; none of your lack-a-days! none of your gambols, nor your tricks to me: Good now, good now! give me my clothes!

here, take your tawdry trappings! I have found you out at last: I'll be no longer your property.

Jen. Wonderful! what's all this, lady? Good now, good now! what's here! a stage play?

Sir Gre. Play me no plays; but give me my wig; and your precious friend, my loving cousin, pize on the kindred, let'n———

Jen. Good now, good now! what are these folks? as sure as a gun, they're mad.

Sir Gre. Mad! no, no; we are neither mad nor fools: no thanks to you, though.

Mrs Pen. What is all this; can you unravel this perplexity, untwine this mystery, sir Gregory Gazette?

Sir Gre. He sir Gregory Gazette? Lack-a-day, lady! you are tricked, imposed upon, bamboozled: Good now, good now! 'tis I am sir Gregory Gazette.

Mrs Pen. How?

Tim. Faith and sole, 'tis true, mistress; and I am his son Tim, and will swear it.

Mrs Pen. Why, isn't Mr Timothy Gazette with my niece Susannah Trifle?

Tim. Who, me! Lord, no, 'tis none of I; it is cousin Hartop in my cloaths.

Mrs Pen. What's this? and pray, who———

Jen. Why, as I see the affair is concluded, you may, madam, call me Jenkins. Come, Hartop, you may now throw off your disguise; the knight had like to have embarrassed us.

Mrs Pen. How, Mr Jenkins! and would you, sir, participate of a plot to——

Har. Madam, in the issue, your family will, I hope, have no great reason to repent. I always had the greatest veneration for Miss Penelope Trifle's understanding; if the highest esteem for her virtues can entitle me to the honour of being regarded as her relation—

Mrs Pen. Sir, I shall determine on nothing, 'till I am apprised of my brother's resolution.

Har. For that we must wait. Sir Gregory, I must intreat you and your son's pardon for some little liberties I have taken with you both. Mr Jenkins, I have the highest obligation to your friendship; and, miss, when we become a little better acquainted, I flatter myself the change will not prove unpleasing.

Suck. I know nothing at all about it.

Har. Sir Gregory, we shall have your company at dinner?

Sir Gre. Lack-a-day! no, no; that boy has spoiled my stomach. Come, Tim, fetch thy rib, and let us be jogging towards Wales; but how thou wilt get off with thy mother———

Tim. Never fear, father———

Since you've been pleased our nuptial knot to bless,
We shall be happy all our lives———more or less.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

APPRENTICE.

BY

MURPHY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

WINGATE, *a passionate old man, particularly fond of money and figures, and involuntarily uneasy about his son.*
DICK, *his son, bound to an apothecary, and fond of going on the stage.*
GARGLE, *an apothecary.*
SIMON, *servant to* GARGLE.
CATCHPOLE, *a bailiff.*
Scotchman.
Irishman.

WOMEN.

CHARLOTTE, *daughter to* GARGLE.

Spouting-club, Watchmen, &c.

Scene—London.

ACT. I.

SCENE—I.

Enter WINGATE *and* SIMON.

Win. NAY, nay, but I tell you I am convinced —I know it is so; and so, friend, don't you think to trifle with me;—I know you're in the plot, you scoundrel; and if you don't discover all, I'll—

Sim. Dear heart, sir, you won't give a body time.—

Win. Zookers! a whole month missing, and no account of him, far or near; wounds! 'tis unaccountable——Look ye, friend, don't you pretend——

Sim. Lord, sir! you're so main passionate, you won't let a body speak.

Win. Speak out then, and don't stand muttering: what a lubberly fellow you are! ha, ha!—Why don't you speak out, you blockhead?

Sim. Lord, sir, to be sure, the gentleman is a fine young gentleman, and a sweet young gentleman—but, lack-a-day, sir! how should I know any thing of him?

Win. Sirrah, I say he could not be 'prentice to your master so long, and you live so long in one house with him, without knowing his haunts, and all his ways; and then, varlet, what brings you here to my house so often?

Sim. My master Gargle and I, sir, are so uneasy about un, that I have been running all over the town since morning, to enquire for un; and so in my way, I thought I might as well call here—

Win. A villain, to give his father all this trouble! and so, you have not heard any thing of him, friend?

Sim. Not a word, sir, as I hope for marcy! though, as sure as you are there, I believe I can guess what's come on un. As sure as any thing, master, the gypsies have gotten hold on un, and we shall have un come home, as thin as a rake,

like the young girl in the city, with living upon nothing but crusts and water for six-and-twenty days.

Win. The gypsies have got hold of him, ye blockhead! Get out of the room——Here, you Simon!

Sim. Sir?

Win. Where are you going in such a hurry?—Let me see; what must be done?—A ridiculous numskull, with his damned Cassanders and Cloppatras and trumpery; with his romances, and his Odyssey Popes, and a parcel of rascals not worth a groat—wearing stone buckles, and cocking his hat—I never wear stone buckles, never cock my hat. But, zookers! I'll not put myself in a passion. Simon, do you step back to your master, my friend Gargle, and tell him I want to speak with him—though I don't know what I should send for him for—a sly, slow, hesitating blockhead! he'll only plague me with his physical cant and his nonsense—Why don't you go, you booby, when I bid you?

Sim. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Win. This fellow will be the death of me at last; I can't sleep in my bed sometimes for him. An absurd, insignificant rascal—to stand in his own light! Death and fury, that we can't get children, without having a love for them! I have been turmoiling for the fellow all the days of my life, and now the scoundrel's run away—Suppose I advertise the dog, and promise a reward to any one that can give an account of him—well, but—why should I throw away my money after him? why, as I don't say what reward, I may give what I please when they come—ay, but if the villain should deceive me, and happen to be dead; why, then, he tricks me out of two shillings; my money's flung into the fire. Zookers! I'll not put myself in a passion; let him follow his nose; 'tis nothing at all to me; what care I?——What do you come back for, friend?

Re-enter SIMON.

Sim. As I was going out, sir, the post came to the door, and brought this letter.

Win. Let me see it———The gypsies have got hold of him! ha, ha! what a pretty fellow you are! ha, ha! why don't you step where I bid you, sirrah?

Sim. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Win. Well, well——I'm resolved, and it shall be so——I'll advertise him to-morrow morning, and promise, if he comes home, all shall be forgiven: and when the blockhead comes, I may do as I please—ha, ha! I may do as I please!—Let me see: He had on—a silver-looped hat: I never liked those vile silver-loops—A silver-looped hat; and—and—Slidikins, what signifies what he had on?—I'll read my letter, and think no more about him. Hey! what a plague have we here?

[*Mutters to himself.*] Bristol——a——what's all this?

'Esteemed friend,

'Last was 20th ultimo, since none of thine, 'which will occasion brevity. The reason of my 'writing to thee at present, is to inform thee, that 'thy son came to our place with a company of 'strollers, who were taken up by the magistrate, 'and committed, as vagabonds, to jail.'—Zookers! I'm glad of it—a villain of a fellow! Let him lie there———'I am sorry thy lad should follow 'such profane courses; but, out of the esteem I 'bear unto thee, I have taken thy boy out of con-'finement, and sent him off for your city in the 'waggon, which left this four days ago. He is 'signed to thy address, being the needful from 'thy friend and servant,

'EBEENEEZOR BROADBRIM.'

Wounds! what did he take the fellow out for? a scoundrel, rascal! turned stage-player!—I'll never see the villain's face.—Who comes there?

Enter SIMON.

Sim. I met my master on the way, sir—our cares are over: Here he is, sir.

Win. Let him come in—and do you go down stairs, you blockhead. [*Exit* SIMON.

Enter GARGLE.

Win. So friend Gargle, here's a fine piece of work—Dick's turned vagabond!

Gar. He must be put under a proper regimen directly, sir: He arrived at my house within these ten minutes, but in such a trim! he's now below stairs; I judged it proper to leave him there, till I had prepared you for his reception.

Win. Death and fire! what could put it into the villain's head to turn buffoon?

Gar. Nothing so easily accounted for: Why, when he ought to be reading the dispensatory, there was he constantly reading over plays and farces, and Shakespeare.

Win. Ay, that damned Shakespeare! I hear the fellow was nothing but a deer-stealer in Warwickshire: Zookers! if they had hanged him out of the way, he would not now be the ruin of honest men's children. But what right had he to read Shakespeare? I never read Shakespeare! Wounds! I caught the rascal, myself, reading that nonsensical play of Hamlet, where the prince is keeping company with strollers and vagabonds: A fine example, Mr Gargle!

Gar. His disorder is of the malignant kind, and my daughter has taken the infection from him—bless my heart! she was as innocent as water-gruel, till he spoilt her. I found her, the other night, in the very fact.

Win. Zookers! you don't say so?—caught her in the fact!

Gar. Ay, in the very fact of reading a play-book in bed.

Win. O, is that the fact you mean? Is that all? though that's bad enough.

Gar. But I have done for my young madam: I have confined her to her room, and locked up all her books.

Win. Look ye, friend Gargle, I'll never see the villain's face: Let him follow his nose, and bite the bridle.

Gar. Lenitives, Mr Wingate, lenitives are properest at present: His habit requires gentle alteratives: but leave him to my management; about twenty ounces of blood, with a cephalic tincture, and he may do very well.

Win. Where is the scoundrel?

Gar. Dear sir, moderate your anger, and don't use such harsh language.

Win. Harsh language! Why, do you think, man, I'd call him a scoundrel, if I had not a regard for him? You don't hear me call a stranger a scoundrel?

Gar. Dear sir, he may still do very well; the boy has very good sentiments.

Win. Sentiment! a fig for sentiment! let him get money, and never miss an opportunity—I never missed an opportunity; got up at five in the morning; struck a light; made my own fire; worked my finger's ends; and this vagabond of a fellow is going his own way—with all my heart; what care I? let him follow his nose; let him follow his nose—a ridiculous——

Gar. Ay, ridiculous, indeed, sir—Why, for a long time past, he could not converse in the language of common sense. Ask him but a trivial question, and he'd give some cramp answer out of some of his plays that had been running in his head, and so there's no understanding a word he says.

Win. Zookers! this comes of his keeping company with wits, and be damned to them for wits, ha, ha! Wits! a fine thing indeed, ha, ha! 'Tis the most beggarly, rascally, contemptible thing on earth!

Gar. And then, sir, I have found out that he went three times a-week to a spouting-club.

Win. A spouting-club, friend Gargle! What's a spouting-club?

Gar. A meeting of 'prentices and clerks, and giddy young men, intoxicated with plays; and so they meet in public-houses to act speeches; there they all neglect business, despise the advice of their friends, and think of nothing but to become actors.

Win. You don't say so!——a spouting-club! wounds! I believe they are all mad.

Gar. Ay, mad indeed, sir: Madness is occasioned in a very extraordinary manner; the spirits flowing in particular channels—

Win. 'Sdeath, you're as mad yourself as any of them!

Gar. And continuing to run in the same ducts—

Win. Ducks! Damn your ducks!—Who's below there?

Gar. The texture of the brain becomes disordered, and—[WINGATE *walks about uneasily, and* GARGLE *follows.*]—thus, by the pressure on the nerves, the head is disturbed, and so your son's malady is contracted.—

Win. Who's without there?—Don't plague me so, man.

Gar. But I shall alter the morbid state of the juices, correct his blood, and produce laudable chyle.

Win. Zookers, friend Gargle, don't tease me so; don't plague me with your physical nonsense—Who's below there? Tell that fellow to come up.

Gar. Dear sir, be a little cool—Inflammatories may be dangerous. Do, pray, sir, moderate your passions.

Win. Prithee, be quiet, man—I'll try what I can do—Here he comes.

Enter DICK.

Dick. *Now, my good father, what's the matter?*

Win. So, friend, you have been upon your travels, have you? You have had your frolic? Look ye, young man, I'll not put myself in a passion: But, death and fire, you scoundrel, what right have you to plague me in this manner? Do you think I must fall in love with your face, because I am your father?

Dick. *A little more than kin, and less than kind.*

Win. Ha, ha! what a pretty figure you cut now! ha, ha!—why don't you speak, you blockhead? Have you nothing to say for yourself?

Dick. Nothing to say for yourself!—What an old prig it is!

Win. Mind me, friend—I have found you out; I see you'll never come to good. Turn stage-player! Wounds! you'll not have an eye in your head in a month, ha, ha! you'll have them knocked out of the sockets with withered apples; remember I tell you so.

Dick. A critic too! [*Whistles.*] Well done, old Square-toes!

Win. Look ye, young man; take notice of what I say: I made my own fortune, and I could do the same again. Wounds! if I were placed at the bottom of Chancery-lane, with a brush and black-ball, I'd make my own fortune again—you read Shakespeare!—Get Cocker's Arithmetic; you may buy it for a shilling on any stall—best book that ever was wrote.

Dick. Pretty well, that; ingenious, faith!—

Egad, the old fellow has a pretty notion of letters!

Win. Can you tell how much is five-eighths of three-sixteenths of a pound? Five-eighths of three sixteenths of a pound. Ay, ay, I see you're a blockhead; look ye, young man, if you have a mind to thrive in this world, study figures, and make yourself useful; make yourself useful.

Dick. *How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable, seem to me all the uses of this world!*

Win. Mind the scoundrel now——

Gar. Do, Mr Wingate, let me speak to him—softly, softly; I'll touch him gently: Come, come, young man, lay aside this sulky humour, and speak as becomes a son.

Dick. *O Jeptha, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!*

Win. What does the fellow say?

Gar. He relents, sir. Come, come, youn man, he'll forgive——

Dick. *They fool me to the top of my bent*—— Gad, I'll hum 'em to get rid of 'em—*a truant disposition, good my lord*—No, no, stay, that's not right, I have a better speech—*It is as you say; when we are sober, and reflect but ever so little on our follies, we are ashamed and sorry; and yet, the very next minute, we rush again into the very same absurdities.*

Win. Well said, lad, well said! mind me, friend: Commanding our own passions, and artfully taking advantage of other peoples, is the sure road to wealth: Death and fire! but I won't put myself in a passion: 'Tis my regard for you makes me speak; and if I tell you you're a scoundrel, 'tis for your good.

Dick. Without doubt, sir. [*Stifling a laugh.*

Win. If you want any thing, you shall be provided: have you any money in your pocket? ha, ha! what a ridiculous numskull you are now! ha, ha! Come, here's some money for you—[*Pulls out his money, and looks at it.*] I'll give it to you another time; and so you'll mind what I say to you, and make yourself useful for the future.

Dick. *Else, wherefore breathe I in a Christian land?*

Win. Zookers! you blockhead, you'd better stick to your business, than turn buffoon, and get truncheons broke upon your arm, and be tumbling upon carpets.

Dick. *I shall in all my best obey you, sir.*

Win. Very well, friend; very well said—you may do very well if you please; and so I'll say no more to you, but make yourself useful; and so now, go and clean yourself, and make ready to go home to your business; and mind me, young man, let me see no more play-books, and let me never find that you wear a laced waistcoat—you scoundrel, what right have you to wear a laced waistcoat? I never wore a laced waistcoat; never wore one till I was forty. But I'll not put myself in a passion: Go and change your dress, friend.

Dick. I shall, sir——

I must be cruel, only to be kind;
Thus bad begins, but worse remains behind.

Cocker's Arithmetic, sir?

Win. Ay, Cocker's Arithmetic. Study figures, and they'll carry you through the world.

Dick. Yes, sir. [*Stifling a laugh.*] Cocker's Arithmetic! [*Exit* DICK.

Win. Let him mind me, friend Gargle, and I'll make a man of him.

Gar. Ay, sir, you know the world. The young man will do very well. I wish he were out of his time; he shall then have my daughter.

Win. Yes, but I'll touch the cash—he shan't finger it during my life. I must keep a tight hand over him. [*Goes to the door.*] Do ye hear, friend? Mind what I say, and go home to your business immediately. Friend Gargle, I'll make a man of him——

Enter DICK.

Dick. *Who called on Achmet? Did not Barbarossa require me here?*

Win. What's the matter now?——Barossa! Wounds! What's Barossa? Does the fellow call me names? What makes the blockhead stand in such confusion?

Dick. *That Barbarossa should suspect my truth!*

Win. The fellow's stark staring mad! Get out of the room! you villain, get out of the room! [DICK *stands in a sullen mood.*

Gar. Come, come, young man, every thing is easy; don't spoil all again. Go and change your dress, and come home to your business—nay, nay, be ruled by me. [*Thrusts him off.*

Win. I'm very peremptory, friend Gargle; if he vexes me once more, I'll have nothing to say to him. Well, but now I think of it, I have Cocker's arithmetic below stairs in the counting-house; I'll step and get it for him, and so he shall take it home with him. Friend Gargle, your servant.

Gar. Mr Wingate, a good evening to you; you'll send him home to his business.

Win. He shall follow you home directly. Five-eighths of three-sixteenths of a pound! Multiply the numerator by the denominator; five times sixteen is ten times eight, ten times eight is eighty, and a—a—carry one. [*Exit.*

Enter DICK *and* SIMON.

Sim. Lord love ye, master—I'm so glad you're come back—Come, we had as good e'en gang home to my master Gargle's——

Dick. No, no, Simon, stay a moment; this is but a scurvy coat I have on, and I know my father has always some jemmy thing locked up in his closet. I know his ways; he takes them in pawn, for he'll never part with a shilling without security.

Sim. Hush! he'll hear us. Stay, I believe he's coming up stairs.

Dick. [*Goes to the door, and listens.*] No, no, no; he's going down, growling and grumbling—ay, say ye so, scoundrel, rascal! let him bite the bridle—Six times twelve is seventy-two.—All's safe, man, never fear him; do you stand here, I shall dispatch this business in a crack.

Sim. Blessings on him! what is he about now? Why, the door is locked, master.

Dick. Ay, but I can easily force the lock; you shall see me do it as well as any sir John Brute of them all; this right leg here is the best locksmith in England—so, so! [*Forces the door, and goes in.*]

Sim. He's at his plays again. Odds my heart, he's a rare hand! he'll go through with it, I'll warrant him! Old Cojer must not smoke that I have any concern. I must be main cautious—Lord bless his heart! he's to teach me to act Scrub. He begun with me long ago, and I got as far as the Jesuit, before a went out of town: —*Scrub! Coming, sir. Lord, ma'am, I've a whole packet full of news—some say one thing, and some say another; but, for my part, ma'am —I believe he's a Jesuit.*'—that's main pleasant —*I believe he's a Jesuit.*

Re-enter DICK.

Dick. *I have done the deed—Didst thou not hear a noise?*

Sim. No, master; we're all snug.

Dick. This coat will do charmingly! I have bilked the old fellow nicely!—*In a dark corner of his cabinet, I found this paper; what it is the light will shew.*

'I promise to pay'—ha!—

'I promise to pay to Mr Moneytrap, or order, on demand'—'tis his hand, a note of his; *yet more* —the sum of seven pounds fourteen shillings and sevenpence, value received by me.'—London, this 15th June, 1755—*'Tis wanting what should follow;* his name should follow, but 'tis torn off—because the note is paid.

Sim. O Lord! Dear sir, you'll spoil all——I wish we were well out of the house——Our best way, master, is to make off directly.

Dick. I will, I will; but first help me on with this coat; Simon, you shall be my dresser; you'll be fine and happy behind the scenes.—

Sim. O Lud! it will be main pleasant; I have been behind the scenes in the country, when I lived with the man that shewed wild beastices.

Dick. Hark'e, Simon; when I am playing some deep tragedy, and *cleave the general ear with horrid speech*, you must stand between the scenes, and cry bitterly.

[*Teaches him.*

Sim. Yes, sir.

Dick. And when I'm playing comedy, you must be ready to laugh your guts out, [*Teaches him.*] for I shall be very pleasant—Tolderoll—[*Dances.*]

Sim. Never doubt me, sir.——

Dick. Very well; now run down and open the street-door; I'll follow you in a crack.

Sim. I am gone to serve you, master——

Dick. *To serve thyself*——for, look'e, Simon, when I am a manager, claim thou of me the care of the wardrobe, with all those moveables, whereof the property-man now stands possest.——

Sim. O Lud! this is charming—Hush! I am gone. [*Going.*

Dick. Well, but hark'e, Simon, come hither; *what money have you about you, Master Matthew?*

Sim. But a tester, sir.

Dick. A tester!——That's something of the least, Master Matthew; let's see it.

Sim. You have had fifteen sixpences now——

Dick. Never mind that, I'll pay you all at my benefit.

Sim. I don't doubt that, master——but mum. [*Exit.*

Dick. *Thus far we run before the wind.* An apothecary! make an apothecary of me!—what! cramp my genius over a pestle and mortar, or mew me up in a shop, with an alligator stuft, and a beggarly account of empty boxes!—to be culling simples, and constantly adding to the bills of mortality!—No, no! It will be much better to be pasted up in capitals, 'The part of 'Romeo, by a young gentleman, who never ap-'peared on any stage before!'——My ambition fires at the thought——But hold—mayn't I run some chance of failing in my attempt—hissed—pelted—laughed at—not admitted into the Green-room——That will never do——*Down, busy devil, down! down!*—Try it again:—loved by the women, envied by the men, applauded by the pit, clapped by the gallery, admired by the boxes. Dear colonel, is not he a charming creature? My lord, don't you like him of all things?—Makes love like an angel!—What an eye he has!—fine legs!—I'll certainly go to his benefit.—Celestial sounds!——And, then, I'll get in with all the painters, and have myself put up in every print-shop——in the character of Macbeth! *This is a sorry sight.* [*Stands in an attitude.*] In the character of Richard, *Give me another horse! bind up my wounds!*——this will do rarely—and, then, I have a chance of getting well married——O glorious thought!——*By heaven I will enjoy it, though but in fancy*——But, what's o'clock?——it must be almost nine.

I'll away at once; this is club-night.—'Egad I'll go to them for a while—the spouters are all met—little they think I'm in town—they'll be surprized to see me—Off I go, and, then, for my assignation with my master Gargle's daughter—— Poor Charlotte!—she's locked up, but I shall find means to settle matters for her escape—— She's a pretty theatrical genius———If she flies to my arms, like a hawk to its perch, it will be so rare an adventure, and so dramatic an incident! —*Limbs, do your office, and support me well; bear me but to her, then fail me if you can!* [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Discovers the spouting-club, the members seated, and roaring out Bravo! while one stands at a distance repeating*——

1st Mem. *Cursed be your senate, cursed your constitution! The curse of growing factions and divisions still vex your councils!*

2*d Mem.* Don't you think his action a little confined?

1*st Mem.* Psha! you blockhead! don't you know that I'm in chains?——

2*d Mem.* Blockhead, say ye?—was not I the first that took compassion on you, when you lay like a sneaking fellow under the counter, and swept your master's shop in a morning? when you read nothing but the Young Man's Pocket Companion, or the True Clerk's Vade Mecum? did not I put Chrononhotonthologos in your hand?

All. Bravo, bravo!—

Pre. Come, gentlemen, let us have no disputes. Consider, gentlemen, this is the honourable society of spouters; and so, to put an end to all animosities, read the seventh rule of this society.

A Member Reads.

'That business, or want of money, shall not 'be received as an excuse for non-attendance; 'nor the anger of parents, or other relations; nor 'the complaints of our masters be ever heard; 'by which means, this society will be able to 'boast its own mimic heroes, and be a nur-'sery of young actorlings for the stage, in 'spite of the mechanic genius of our friends.'

Pre. That is not the rule I mean; but come, *we'll fill a measure the table round———now good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both.*

All. Huzza, huzza, huzza!———

Pre. Come, gentlemen, let us have no quarrels.

All. Huzza, huzza!

Scotch. Come, now, I'll gee you a touch of Macbeeth!——

1*st Mem.* That will be rare! Come let's have it.——

Scotch. What do'st leer at, mon?—I have had muckle applause at Edinburgh, when I enacted in the Reegiceede; and I now intend to do Macbeeth—I saw the degger yesterneet, and I thought I should ha' killed every one that came in my way!

Irish. Stand out of the way, lads, and you'll see me give a touch of Othello, my dear—— [*Takes the cork and burns it, and blacks his face.*] The devil burn the cork! it would not do it fast enough.

1*st Mem.* Here, here; I'll lend you a helping hand.—[*Blacks him.*] [*Knocking at the door.*

2d Mem. *Open locks, whoever knocks.*

Enter DICK.

Dick. *How now, ye secret, black, and midnight hags? what is't ye do?*

All. Ha! The genius come to town—Huzza, huzza! The genius——

Dick. *How fare the honest partners of my heart? Jack Hopeless, give us your hand—— Guildenstern, yours—Ha! Rosencrants—Gentlemen, I rejoice to see ye*—But come, the news, the news of the town! Has any thing been damned? Any new performers this winter? How often has Romeo and Juliet been acted? Come, my bucks, inform me; I want news.

1*st Mem.* You shall know all in good time: but, prithee, my dear boy, how was it? You played at Bristol; let's hear.

2*d Mem.* Ay; let's have it, dear Dick.

Dick. Look ye there, now—*Let's have it, dear boy, and dear Dick.*

1*st Mem.* Nay, nay; but how was you received?

Dick. Romeo was my part—I touched their souls for them; every pale face from the wells was there, and so on I went—but rot them, never mind them—*What bloody scene has Roscius now to act?*

1*st Mem.* Several things; but, Genius, why did you come to us so late? Why did not you come in the beginning of the night?

Dick. Why, I intended it: but who should I meet in my way but my friend Catcall, a devilish good critic; and so he and I went together, and *had our pipes to close the orifice of the stomach, you know;* and what do you think I learned of him?

1*st Mem.* I can't say.

Dick. Can you tell, now, whether the emphasis should be laid upon the epitaph, or the substantive?

1*st Mem.* Why, no——

Dick. Ever, while you live, lay your emphasis upon the epitaph.

Irish. Arrah, my dear, but what is that same epitaph, now?

Dick. *Arrah, my dear cousin Mackshane, won't you put a remembrance upon me?*

Irish. Ow! but is it mocking you are? Look ye, my dear, if you'd be taking me off—Don't you call it taking off? By my shoul, I'd be making you take yourself off——What? If you're for being obstropolous, I would not matter you three skips of a flea.

Dick. Nay, prithee, no offence; I hope we shall be brother-players.

Irish. Ow! then we'd be very good friends; for, you know, two of a trade can never agree, my dear.

Scotch. Locke is certainly reet in his chapter aboot innate ideas; for this mon is born without any at all; and the other mon, yonder, I doot, is no greet heed-piece.

Dick. What do you intend to appear in?

Irish. Othollo, my dear; let me alone; you'll see how I'll bodder them; though, by my shoul, myshelf does not know but I'd be frightened when every thing is in a hubbub, and nothing to be heard, but 'throw him over!'—'over with 'him!'—'off, off, off the stage!'—'music!'—'won't ye ha' some orange-chips?'—'won't ye ha' 'some nonpareills?'—Ow! but, may be, the dear craturs in the boxes will be lucking at my legs—Ow! to be sure—the devil burn the luck they'll give them!

Dick. I shall certainly laugh in the fellow's face. [*Aside.*

Irish. Ow! never mind it; let me alone, my dear; may be, I'd see a little round face from Dublin, in the pit, may be I would; but then, won't I be the first gentleman of my name, that turned stage-player? My cousin would rather see me starve like a gentleman, with honour and reputation—myshelf does be ashamed when I think of it.

Scotch. Stay till you hear me give a specimen of elocution.

Dick. What, with that impediment, sir?

Scotch. Impeediment! What impeediment? I do not leesp, do I? I do no squeent—I am well leemed, am I not?

Irish. By my shoul, if you go to that, I am as well timbered myself as any of them; and shall make a figure in genteel and top comedy.

Scotch. I'll give you a specimen of Mockbeeth.

Irish. Make haste, then; and I'll begin Othollo.

Scotch. *Is this a dagger that I see before me, &c.*

Irish. [*Collaring him.*]—*Willain, be sure you prove my love a whore, &c.*

[*Another member comes forward with his face powdered, and a pipe in his hand.*]

—I am thy father's spirit, Hamlet——

Dick. Po! Prithee, you're not fat enough for a ghost.

Mem. I intend to make my first appearance in it, for all that; only I'm puzzled about one thing—I want to know, when I come on first, whether I should make a bow to the audience?

Another Mem. Now, gentlemen, for the true way of dying—[*Spreads a blanket.*]—now for a little phrenzy—[*Repeats a dying speech, and rolls himself up in the blanket.*]

[*Watch behind the scenes; past five o'clock, cloudy morning.*]

Dick. Hey! past five o'clock—'Sdeath, I shall miss my appointment with Charlotte; *I have staid too long, and shall lose my proselyte*—— come, let us adjourn.

All. Ay; let us sally forth.

Irish. With all my heart; though I should have boddered them finely, if they had staid.

Scotch. I should have sheened in Mockbeeth; but never meend it; I'll go now to my friend the bookseller, and translate Cornelius Tacitus, or Grotius de Jure Belli—and so, gentlemen, your servant.

Scotch. Huzza, huzza!

Dick. *We'll scower the watch; confusion to morality! I wish the constable were married; huzza, huzza!*

Irish. By my shoul, myshelf did not care if I had a wife, with a good fortune, to be hindering me from going on; but no matter; I may meet with a willing cratur somewhere.

[*Exit Irish. singing.*

All. Huzza, huzza! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Street.*

Enter a watchman.

Watch. Past five o'clock, cloudy morning—Mercy on us!—all mad, I believe, in this house—they're at this trade three nights in the week, I think—Past five o'clock, a cloudy morning.

All. Huzza!—[*Without.*]

Watch. What, in the name of wonder, are they all at?

Hurra, hurra!—[*Without.*]

Enter the spouters.

Dick. *Angels and ministers of grace defend us!*

1st Mem. *By Heavens I'll tear you joint by joint, and strew this hungry church-yard with your limbs!*

Dick. *Avaunt, and quit my sight! thy bones are marrowless—there's no speculation in those eyes, that thou dost glare withal.*

Watch. Prithee, don't disturb the peace.

A Mem. *Be sure you write him down an ass.*

Dick. *Be alive again; and dare me to the de-*

sart with thy pole—take any shape but that, and my firm nerves shall never tremble.

Watch. Soho, soho!

Enter watchmen from all parts, some drunk, some coughing, &c.

2d Watch. What's the matter there?

1st Watch. Here are the disturbers of the peace—I charge them all——

Dick. *Unmannered slave! advance your halbert higher than my breast, or, by St Paul, I'll strike thee down, and spurn thee, beggar, for this insolence——*

[*They fight,* DICK *is knocked down. Exeunt Watchmen, fighting the rest.*

Dick. I have it; it will do; 'Egad, I'll make my escape now—*Oh, I am fortune's fool—*

Re-enter watchmen, &c.

Watch. Come, bring them along.

1st Mem. *Good ruffians, hold a while.*

2d Mem. *I am unfortunate, but not ashamed of being so.*

Watch. Come, come; bring them along.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another street.*

Enter DICK, *with a lanthorn and a ladder.*

Dick. All's quiet here; the coast's clear; now for my adventure with Charlotte; this ladder will do rarely for the business, though it would be better, if it were a ladder of ropes—but hold: have not I seen something like this on the stage? Yes I have, in some of the entertainments—Ay; *I remember an apothecary, and hereabout he dwells*—this is my master Gargle's; being dark, the beggar's shop is shut—*What, ho! apothecary!*—but soft—*What light breaks through yonder window? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun. Arise, fair sun, &c.*

Char. *Who's there? My Romeo?*

Dick. *The same, my love; if it not thee displease.*

Char. Hush! Not so loud; you'll waken my father.

Dick. *Alas! there's more peril in thy eye—*

Char. Nay; but, prithee, now, I tell you you'll spoil all; what made you stay so long?

Dick. *Chide not, my fair; but let the god of love laugh in thy eyes, and revel in thy heart.*

Char. As I am a living soul, you'll ruin every thing; be but quiet, and I'll come down to you.

[*Going.*

Dick. No, no; not so fast: Charlotte, let us act the garden scene first.

Char. A fiddle-stick for the garden scene!

Dick. Nay, then, I'll act Ranger—*up I go, neck or nothing.*

Char. Dear heart, you're enough to frighten a body out of one's wits; don't come up; I tell you there's no occasion for the ladder; I have settled every thing with Simon, and he's to let me through the shop, when he opens it.

Dick. Well, but I tell you I would not give a farthing for it without the ladder; and so, up I go!

Enter SIMON *at the door.*

Sim. Sir, sir; madam, madam——

Dick. Prithee, be quiet, Simon; I am ascending the high top-gallant of my joy.

Sim. An't please you, master, my young mistress may come through the shop; I am going to sweep it out, and she may escape that way fast enow.

Char. That will do purely; and so do you stay where you are, and prepare to receive me.

[*Exit from above.*

Dick. No, no, but that won't take; you shan't hinder me from going through my part——[*Goes up.*]—*A woman, by all that's lucky! Neither old nor crooked; in I go*—[Goes in.]—*and, for fear of the pursuit of the family, I'll make sure of the ladder.*

Sim. Hist, hist, master! leave that there, to save me from being suspected.

Dick. With all my heart, Simon.

[*Exit from above.*

Sim. [*Alone.*]—Lord love him, how comical he is! It will be fine for me, when we're playing the fool together, to call him brother Martin. *Brother Martin!*

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. O lud! I'm frighted out of my wits; where is he?

Sim. He's a coming, madam—[*Calls to him.*]—*Brother Martin!*

Enter DICK.

Dick. *Cuckold him, madam, by all means—I'm your man.*

Char. Well now, I protest and vow, I wonder how you can serve a body so; feel with what a pit-a-pat action my heart beats.

Dick. *'Tis an alarm to love; quick, let me snatch thee to thy Romeo's arms, &c.*

Watch. [*Behind the scenes.*]—Past six o'clock, and a cloudy morning.

Char. Dear heart, don't let us stand fooling here; as I live and breathe, we shall both be taken; do, for Heaven's sake, let us make our escape.

Watch. Past six o'clock, and a cloudy morning.

Char. It comes nearer and nearer; let us make off.

Dick. Give us your hand, then, my pretty little adventurer; I attend you.

Yes, my dear Charlotte, we will go together,
Together to the theatre we'll go,
There, to their ravished eyes, our skill we'll show,
And point new beauties to the pit below.

Sim. Heavens bless the couple of them! But mum.

[*Exit, and shuts the door after him.*

Enter Bailiff, and his followers.

Bail. That's he, yonder, as sure as you're alive; ay, it is; and he has been about some mischief here.

Fol. No, no, that an't he; that one wears a laced coat—though I can't say—as sure as a gun, it is he.

Bail. Ay, I smoked him at once; do you run that way, and stop at the bottom of Catherine street; I'll go up Drury-lane, and, between us both, it will be odds if we miss him.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter watchmen.

Watch. Past six o'clock, and a cloudy morning. Hey-day! what's here! a ladder at Mr Gargle's window? I must alarm the family: Ho! Mr Gargle?

[*Knocks at the door.*

Gar. [*Above.*]—What's the matter? How comes this window to be open! Ha! A ladder! Who's below, there?

1*st Watch.* I hope you an't robbed, Mr Gargle? As I was going my rounds, I found your window open.

Gar. I fear this is some of that young dog's tricks; take away the ladder; I must enquire into all this. [*Exit.*

Enter SIMON, *like* SCRUB.

Sim. *Thieves! Murder! Thieves! Popery!*

Watch. What's the matter with the fellow?

Sim. *Spare all I have, and take my life!*

Watch. Any mischief in the house?

Sim. *They broke in with fire and sword; they'll be here this minute; five and forty*—this will do charmingly—my young master taught me this. [*Aside.*

1*st Watch.* What, are there thieves in the house?

Sim. *With sword and pistol, sir; five and forty.*

Watch. Nay, then, 'tis time for me to go; for, mayhap, I may come to ha' the worst on't.

[*Exit Watch.*

Enter GARGLE.

Gar. Dear heart! Dear heart! She's gone! She's gone! My daughter! My daughter! What's the fellow in such a fright for?

Sim. *Down on your knees—down on your marrowbones*—(this will make him think, I know nothing of the matter—bless his heart for teaching me)—*down on your marrowbones!*

Gar. Get up, you fool! get up—dear heart, I'm all in a fermentation.

Enter WINGATE, *reading a newspaper.*

Win. [*Reads.*]—'Wanted, on good security, 'five hundred pounds, for which lawful interest 'will be given, and a good premium allowed. 'Whoever this may suit, enquire for S. T. at the 'Crown and Rolls, in Chancery-lane.' This may be worth looking after. I'll have a good premium; if the fellow's a fool, I'll fix my eye on him; other people's follies are an estate to the man that knows how to make himself useful. So, friend Gargle, you're up early, I see; nothing like rising early; nothing to be got by lying in bed, like a lubberly fellow—what's the matter with you? Ha, ha! You look like a——Ha, ha!

Gar. O—no wonder—my daughter, my daughter!

Win. Your daughter! What signifies a foolish girl?

Gar. Oh, dear heart! dear heart! out of the window!

Win. Fallen out of the window! Well, she was a woman, and 'tis no matter; if she's dead, she's provided for. Here, I found the book—could not meet with it last night—here it is—there's more sense in it, than in all their Macbeths, and their trumpery—[*Reads.*]—Cocker's arithmetic—look ye here, now, friend Gargle—Suppose you have the sixteenth part of a ship, and I buy one fifth of you, what share of the ship do I buy?

Gar. Oh, dear sir, 'tis a melancholy case——

Win. A melancholy case, indeed, to be so ignorant; why should not a man know every thing? one fifth of one sixteenth, what part have I of the whole? Let me see; I'll do it a short way—

Gar. Lost beyond redemption!——

Win. Zookers! be quiet, man; you put me out—Seven times seven is forty-nine, and six times twelve is seventy-two—and—and—and—a here, friend Gargle, take the book, and give it that scoundrel of a fellow.

Gar. Lord, sir, he's returned to his tricks.

Win. Returned to his tricks! What, broke loose again?

Gar. Ay; and carried off my daughter with him.

Win. Carried off your daughter! How did the rascal contrive that?

Gar. Oh, dear sir, the watch alarmed us a while ago, and I found a ladder at the window; so, I suppose my young madam made her escape that way.

Win. Wounds! What business had the fellow with your daughter?

Gar. I wish I had never taken him into my house; he may debauch the poor girl——

Win. And suppose he does—she's a woman, an't she? Ha, ha! friend Gargle, ha, ha!

Gar. Dear sir, how can you talk thus to a man distracted?

Win. I'll never see the fellow's face.

Sim. Secrets! Secrets!

Win. What, are you in the secret, friend?

Sim. To be sure; there be secrets in all families—but, for my part, I'll not speak a word *pro* or *con*, till there's a peace.

Win. You won't speak, sirrah! I'll make you speak———Do you know nothing of this numskull?

Sim. Who, I, sir? He came home last night from your house, and went out again directly.

Win. You saw him, then?

Sim. Yes, sir; saw him to be sure, sir; he made me open the shop door for him; he stopped on the threshold, and pointed at one of the clouds, and asked me if it was not like an ouzel?

Win. Like an ouzel? Wounds! What's an ouzel?

Gar. And the young dog came back in the dead of night to steal away my daughter!

Win. I'll tell you what, friend Gargle——I'll think no more of the fellow---let him bite the bridle—I'll go mind my business, and not miss an opportunity.

Gar. Good now, Mr Wingate, don't leave me in this affliction! consider, when the animal spirits are properly employed, the whole system's exhilarated, a proper circulation in the smaller ducts, or capillary vessels—

Win. Look ye there, now; the fellow's at his ducks again, ha, ha!

Gar. But when the spirits are under influence———

Win. Ha, ha! What a fine fellow you are now! You're as mad with your physical nonsense, as my son with his Shakespeare and Ben Thompson———

Gar. Dear sir, let us go in quest of him; he shall be well phlebotomized; and, for the future, I'll keep his solids and fluids in proper balance———

Win. Don't tell me of your solids; I tell you he'll never be solid: and so I'll go and mind my business—let me see, where is this chap—[*Reads.*] —ay, ay; at the Crown and Rolls—good morning, friend Gargle; don't plague yourself about the numskull; study fractions, man; vulgar fractions will carry you through the world; arithmetical proportion is, when the antecedent and consequent—a— [*Going.*

Enter a Porter.

Win. Who are you, pray? What do you want?

Por. Is one Mr Gargle here?

Gar. Yes; who wants him?

Por. Here's a letter for you.

Gar. Let me see it. O dear heart!—[*Reads.*] —'To Mr Gargle at the Pestle and Mortar'—'Slidikins! this is a letter from that unfortunate young fellow———

Win. Let me see it, Gargle.

Gar. A moment's patience, good Mr Wingate, and this may unravel all—[*Reads.*]—Poor young man! His brain is certainly turned; I can't make head or tail of it.

Win. Ha, ha! You're a pretty fellow! give it me, man---I'll make it out for you—'tis his hand, sure enough.—[*Reads.*]

'To Mr Gargle, &c.

'Most potent, grave, and reverend doctor, my 'very noble and approved good master! that I 'have taken away your daughter, it is most true, 'true I will marry her; 'tis true, 'tis pity, and pi-'ty 'tis, 'tis true.'—What, in the name of common sense, is all this?—'I have done your shop some 'service, and you know it; no more of that! yet 'I could wish, that, at this time, I had not been 'this thing.'—What can the fellow mean?—'For 'time may have yet one fated hour to come, 'which, winged with liberty, may overtake occa-'sion past.'—Overtake occasion past! Time and tide waits for no man—'I expect redress from 'thy noble sorrows; thine and my poor coun-'try's ever.

'R. WINGATE.'

Mad as a march hare! I have done with him. let him stay till the shoe pinches, a crack-brained numskull!

Por. An't please ye, sir, I fancies the gentleman is a little beside himself; he took hold on me here by the collar, and called me villain, and bid me prove his wife a whore——Lord help him! I never seed the gentleman's spouse in my born days before.

Gar. Is she with him now?

Por. I believe so——There's a likely young woman with him, all in tears.

Gar. My daughter, to be sure———

Win. Let the fellow go and be hanged——Wounds! I would not go the length of my arm to save the villain from the gallows. Where was he, friend, when he gave you this letter?

Por. I fancy, master, the gentleman's under troubles——I brought it from a spunging-house.

Win. From a spunging-house?

Por. Yes, sir, in Grays-Inn-Lane.

Win. Let him lie there, let him lie there—I am glad of it—

Gar. Do, my dear sir, let us step to him—

Win. No, not I, let him stay there—this it is to have a genius—ha, ha! a genius! ha, ha!—a genius is a fine thing, indeed! ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Gar. Poor man! he has certainly a fever on

his spirits—do you step in with me, honest man, till I slip on my coat, and, then, I'll go after this unfortunate boy.

Por. Yes, sir; 'tis in Grays-Inn-lane.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A spunging house;* DICK *and* BAILIFF *at a table, and* CHARLOTTE *sitting in a disconsolate manner by him.*

Bail. Here's my service to you, young gentleman————don't be uneasy; the debt is not much; why do you look so sad?

Dick. Because *captivity has robbed me of a just and dear diversion.*

Bail. Never look sulky at me. I never use any body ill. Come, it has been many a good man's lot; here's my service to you, but we've no liquor; come, we'll have the other bowl————

Dick. *I've now not fifty ducats in the world—yet still I am in love, and pleased with ruin.*

Bail. What do you say? you've fifty shillings, I hope?

Dick. *Now, thank Heaven! I'm not worth a groat.*

Bail. Then, there's no credit here, I can tell you that——you must get bail, or go to Newgate————who do you think is to pay house-rent for you? You see your friends won't come near you—They've all answered in the old cant. 'I've promised my wife never to be bail for any 'body.' or, 'I've sworn not to do it,' or, 'I'd 'lend you the money if I had it, but desire to be 'excused from bailing any man.' The porter you just now sent, will bring the same answer, I warrant.——Such poverty-struck devils as you stay in my house! you shall go to Quod, I can tell you that————

[*Knocking at the door.*

Bail. Coming, coming; I am coming; I shall lodge you in Newgate, I promise you, before night————not worth a groat! you're a fine fellow to stay in a man's house!————You shall go to Quod. [*Exit.*

Dick. Come, clear up, Charlotte, never mind this——come now——let us act the prison-scene in the mourning bride————

Char. How can you think of acting speeches, when we're in such distress?

Dick. Nay, but my dear angel————

Enter WINGATE *and* GARGLE.

Gar. Hush! Do, dear sir, let us listen to him ——I dare say he repents——

Win. Wounds! what clothes are those the fellow has on? Zookers, the scoundrel has robbed me.

Dick. Come, now, we'll practise an attitude—How many of them have you?————

Char. Let me see—one—two—three——and, then, in the fourth act, and then—O, Gemini, I have ten at least————

Dick. That will do swimmingly—I've a round dozen myself—Come, now, begin—you fancy me dead, and I think the same of you—now, mind———— [*They stand in attitudes.*

Win. Only mind the villain!

Dick. *O thou soft fleeting form of Lindamira!*

Char. *Illusive shade of my beloved Lord!*

Dick. *She lives, she speaks, and we shall still be happy.*

Win. You lie, you villain! you shan't be happy.

[*Knocks him down.*

Dick. [*On the ground.*] *Perdition catch your arm! the chance is thine.*

Gar. So, my young madam! I have found you again.

Dick. *Capulet, forbear! Paris, let loose your hold—She is my wife—our hearts are twined together.*

Win. Sirrah, villain, I'll break every bone in your body———— [*Strikes.*

Dick. *Parents have flinty hearts; no tears can move them:——Children must be wretched——*

Win. Get off the ground, you villain! get off the ground!

Dick. 'Tis a pity there are no scene-drawers to lift me——

Win. A scoundrel, to rob your father! you rascal, I have a mind to break your head!

Dick. *What, like this?*

[*Takes off his wig, and shews two patches on his head.*]

Win. 'Tis mighty well, young man—Zookers! I made my own fortune; and I'll take a boy out of the Blue-coat-hospital, and give him all I have. Look'e here, friend Gargle. You know, I am not a hard-hearted man. The scoundrel, you know, has robbed me; so, d'ye see, I won't hang him; I'll only transport the fellow———— And so, Mr Catchpole, you may take him to Newgate————

Gar. Well, but, dear sir, you know I always intended to marry my daughter into your family; and if you let the young man be ruined, my money must all go into another channel.

Win. How's that! into another channel!—Must not lose the handling of his money———— Why, I told you, friend Gargle, I am not a hard-hearted man.

Gar. Why no, sir; but your passions———— However, if you will but make the young gentleman serve out the last year of his apprenticeship, you know I shall be giving over, and I may put him into all my practice.

Win. Ha, ha! Why, if the blockhead would but get as many crabbed physical words from Hyppocrites and Allen, as he has from his nonsensical trumpery—ha, ha! I don't know, be-

tween you and I, but he might pass for a very good physician.

Dick. *And must I leave thee, Juliet?*

Char. Nay, but, prithee now, have done with your speeches. You see we are brought to the last distress, and so you had better make it up—

[*Aside to* DICK.

Dick. Why, for your sake, my dear, I could almost find in my heart———

Win. You'll settle your money on your daughter?

Gar. You know it was always my intention———

Win. I must not let the cash slip through my hands [*Aside.*]. Look'e here, young man———I am the best-natured man in the world. How came this debt, friend?

Bail. The gentleman gave his note at Bristol, I understands, where he boarded; 'tis but twenty pounds———

Win. Twenty pounds! Well, why don't you send to your friend Shakespeare now to bail you———ha, ha! I should like to see Shakespeare give bail--ha, ha! Mr Catchpole, will you take bail of Ben Thompson, and Shakespeare, and Odyssey Popes?

Bail. No such people have been here, sir—are they house-keepers?

Dick. *You do not come to mock my miseries?*

Gar. Hush, young man! you'll spoil all——Let me speak to you——How is your digestion?

Dick. *Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it*———

Char. Nay, but dear Dick, for my sake——

Win. What says he, Gargle?

Gar. He repents, sir—he'll reform———

Win. That's right, lad; now you're right——and if you will but serve out your time, my friend Gargle, here, will make a man of you. Wounds! you'll have his daughter and all his money; and if I hear no more of your trumpery, and you mind your business, and stick to my little Charlotte, and make me a grandfather in my old days; egad, you shall have all mine, too; that is, when I am dead.

Dick. Charlotte, that will do rarely, and we may go to the plays as often as we please——

Char. O, Gemini, it will be the purest thing in the world, and we'll see Romeo and Juliet every time it is acted.

Dick. Ay, that will be a hundred times in a season at least. Besides, it will be like a play, if I reform at the end. *Sir, free me so far in your most generous thoughts, that I have shot my arrow over the house, and hurt my brother.*

Win. What do you say, friend?

Char. Nay, but prithee now do it in plain English———

Dick. Well, well, I will. He knows nothing of metaphors——Sir, you shall find for the future, that we'll both endeavour to give you all the satisfaction in our power.

Win. Very well, that's right; you may do very well. Friend Gargle, I am overjoyed—

Gar. Chearfulness, sir, is the principal ingredient in the composition of health.

Win. Wounds, man! let us hear no more of your physic. Here, young man, put this book in your pocket, and let me see how soon you'll be master of vulgar fractions. Mr Catchpole, step home with me, and I'll pay you the money; you seem to be a notable sort of a fellow, Mr Catchpole; could you nab a man for me?

Catch. Fast enough, sir, when I have the writ—

Win. Very well, come along. I lent a young gentleman a hundred pounds, a cool hundred he called it—ha, ha! it did not stay to cool with him. I had a good premium; but I shan't wait a moment for that—Come along, young man; What right have you to twenty pounds? give you twenty pounds! I never was obliged to my family for twenty pounds—but I'll say no more; if you have a mind to thrive in this world, make yourself useful is the golden rule.

Dick. My dear Charlotte, as you are to be my reward, I'll be a new man——

Char. Well, now, I shall see how much you love me.

Dick. It shall be my study to deserve you; and since we don't go on the stage, 'tis some comfort that the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players.

Some play the upper, some the under parts,
And most assume what's foreign to their hearts;
Thus, life is but a tragi-comic jest,
And all is farce and mummery at best.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

ENGLISHMAN RETURNED FROM PARIS.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

BUCK, *the Englishman returned from Paris.*
CRAB, *his father's executor.*
LORD JOHN, *a respectable young nobleman.*
MACRUTHEN, BUCK's *knavish tutor.*
RACKET, } *English squires.*
TALLYHOE, }
LATITAT, *a lawyer.*
SURGEON.

WOMEN.

LUCINDA, *intended for* BUCK.
LE JONQUIL, LA LOIRE, BEARNOIS, *and Servants.*

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

CRAB *discovered reading.*

'AND I do constitute my very good friend, 'Giles Crab, esq. of St Martin's in the Fields, 'executor to this my will; and do appoint him 'guardian to my ward Lucinda; and do submit 'to his direction the management of all my af-'fairs till the return of my son from his travels; 'whom I do entreat my said executor, in consi-'deration of our ancient friendship, to advise, to 'counsel, &c. &c. 'JOHN BUCK.'

A good, pretty legacy! Let's see; I find myself heir, by this generous devise of my very good friend, to ten actions at common law, nine suits in chancery; the conduct of a boy, bred a booby at home, and finished a fop abroad; together with the direction of a marriageable, and therefore an unmanageable, wench; and all this to an old fellow of sixty-six, who heartily hates business, is tired of the world, and despises every thing in it. Why, how the devil came I to merit——

Enter Servant.

Ser. Mr Latitat of Staple's Inn.

Crab. So, here begin my plagues. Shew the hound in.

Enter LATITAT, *with a bag, &c.*

Lat. I would, Mr Crab, have attended your summons immediately; but I was obliged to sign judgment in error at the common pleas; sue out of the exchequer a writ of *quæ minus;* and sur-

render in *banco regi* the defendant, before the return of *sci fa*, to discharge the bail.

Crab. Prithee, man, none of thy unintelligible law-jargon to me; but tell me, in the language of common sense and thy country, what I am to do?

Lat. Why, Mr Crab, as you are already possessed of a *probat*, and letters of administration *de bonis* are granted, you may sue or be sued. I hold it sound doctrine for no executor to discharge debts, without a receipt upon record; this can be obtained by no means but by an action. Now actions, sir, are of various kinds: There are special actions; actions on the case, or *assumpsits*; actions of trover; actions of *clausum fregit*; actions of battery, actions of—

Crab. Hey, the devil, where's the fellow running now? But hark'e, Latitat, why I thought all our law-proceedings were directed to be in English?

Lat. True, Mr Crab.

Crab. And what do you call all this stuff, ha?

Lat. English.

Crab. The devil you do!

Lat. Vernacular! upon my honour, Mr Crab. For as lord Coke describes the common law to be the perfection——

Crab. So here's a fresh deluge of impertinence. A truce to thy authorities, I beg; and as I find it will be impossible to understand thee without an interpreter, if you will meet me at five, at Mr Brief's chambers, why, if you have any thing to say, he will translate it for me.

Lat. Mr Brief, sir, and translate, sir! Sir, I would have you to know, that no practitioner in Westminster-hall gives clearer——

Crab. Sir, I believe it—for which reason I have referred you to a man who never goes into Westminster-hall.

Lat. A bad proof of his practice, Mr Crab.

Crab. A good one of his principles, Mr Latitat.

Lat. Why sir, do you think that a lawyer——

Crab. Zounds, sir! I never thought about a lawyer. The law is an oracular idol, you are the explanatory ministers; nor should any of my own private concerns have made me bow to your beastly Baal. I had rather lose a cause than contest it. And had not this old doating dunce, sir John Buck, plagued me with the management of his money, and the care of his booby boy, bedlam should sooner have had me than the bar.

Lat. Bedlam! the bar! Since, sir, I am provoked, I don't know what your choice may be, or what your friends may choose for you: I wish I was your *prochain ami*: But I am under some doubts as to the sanity of the testator, otherwise he could not have chosen for his executor, under the sanction of the law, a person who despises the law. And the law, give me leave to tell you, Mr Crab, is the bulwark, the fence, the protection, the *sine qua non*, the *ne plus ultra*——

Crab. Mercy, good six and eightpence!

Lat. The defence, and offence, the by which, and the whereby, the statute common, and customary: or, as Plowden classically and elegantly expresses it, 'tis

Mos commune vetus mores, consulta, senatus,
Hæc tria jus statuunt terra Britannia tibi.

Crab. Zounds, sir, among all your laws, are there none to protect a man in his own house?

Lat. Sir, a man's house is his *castellum*, his castle; and so tender is the law of any infringement of that sacred right, that any attempt to invade it by force, fraud, or violence, clandestinely, or *vi et armis*, is not only deemed felonious, but burglarious. Now, sir, a burglary may be committed, either upon the dwelling, or the outhouse.

Crab. O lud! O lud!

Enter Servant.

Ser. Your clerk, sir—The parties, he says, are all in waiting at your chambers.

Lat. I come. I will but just explain to Mr Crab the nature of a burglary, as it has been described by a late statute.

Crab. Zounds, sir! I have not the least curiosity.

Lat. Sir, but every gentleman should know—.

Crab. Dear sir, be gone.

Lat. But by the late acts of par——

Crab. Help, you dog! Zounds! sir, get out of my house!

Ser. Your clients, sir——

Crab. Push him out! [*The lawyer talking all the while.*] So ho! Hark'e, rascal, if you suffer that fellow to enter my doors again, I'll strip and discard you the very next minute. [*Exit Servant.*] This is but the beginning of my torments. But that I expect the young whelp from abroad every instant, I'd fly for it myself, and quit the kingdom at once.

Enter Servant.

Ser. My young master's travelling tutor, sir, just arrived.

Crab. Oh, then I suppose the blockhead of a baronet is close at his heels. Shew him in. This bear-leader, I reckon now, is either the clumsy curate of the knight's parish church, or some needy Highlander, the outcast of his country, who, with the pride of a German baron, the poverty of a French marquis, the address of a Swiss soldier, and the learning of an academy-usher, is to give our heir-apparent politeness, taste, literature—a perfect knowledge of the world, and of himself.

Enter MACRUTHEN.

Mac. Maister Crab, I am your devoted servant.

Crab. Oh, a British chield, by the mass—Well, where's your charge?

Mac. O, the young baronet is o' the road. I was mighty afraid he had o'erta'en me; for, between Canterbury and Rochester, I was stopt and robbed by a highwayman.

Crab. Robbed! What the devil could he rob you of?

Mac. In gude troth, not a mighty booty. Buchanan's history, Lauder against Melton, and twa pund of high-dried Glasgow.

Crab. A good travelling equipage! Well, and what's become of your cub? where have you left him?

Mac. Main you sir Charles? I left him at Calais, with another young nobleman returning from his travels. But why ca' ye him cub, Maister Crab? In gude troth, there's a meeghty alteration.

Crab. Yes, yes; I have a shrewd guess at his improvements.

Mac. He's quite a phenomenon.

Crab. Oh, a comet, I dare swear; but not an unusual one at Paris. The Fauxbourg of St. Germain's swarms with such, to the no small amusement of our very good friends the French.

Mac. Oh, the French were mighty fond of him.

Crab. But as to the language, I suppose he's a perfect master of that?

Mac. He can caw for aught that he need; but he is na quite maister of the accent.

Crab. A most astonishing progress!

Mac. Suspend your judgment a while, and you'll find him all you wish, allowing for the sallies of juvenility; and I must take the vanity to myself of being, in a great measure, the author.

Crab. Oh, if he be but a faithful copy of the admirable original, he must be a finished piece.

Mac. You are pleased to compliment.

Crab. Not a whit. Well, and what—I suppose you and your——What's your name?

Mac. Macruthen, at your service.

Crab. Macruthen! Hum! You and your pupil agreed very well?

Mac. Perfectly. The young gentleman is of an amiable disposition.

Crab. Oh, ay; and it would be wrong to sour his temper. You know your duty better, I hope, than to contradict him?

Mac. It was na for me, Maister Crab.

Crab. Oh, by no means, Mr Macruthen; all your business was to keep him out of frays; to take care, for the sake of his health, that his wine was genuine, and his mistresses as they should be. You pimped for him, I suppose?

Mac. Pimp for him! D'ye mean to affront—

Crab. To suppose the contrary would be the affront, Mr Tutor. What, man, you know the world? 'Tis not by contradiction, but by compliance, that men make their fortunes. And was it for you to thwart the humour of a lad, upon the threshold of ten thousand pounds a-year?

Mac. Why, to be sure, great allowances must be made.

Crab. No doubt, no doubt!

Mac. I see, Maister Crab, you know mankind. You are sir John Buck's executor?

Crab. True.

Mac. I have a little thought that may be useful to us baith.

Crab. As how?

Mac. Cou'd na we contrive to make a hond o' the young baronet?

Crab. Explain.

Mac. Why you, by the will, have the care o' the cash; and I can make a shift to manage the lad.

Crab. Oh, I conceive you! And so, between us both, we may contrive to ease him of that inheritance which he knows not how properly to employ, and apply it to our own use. You do know how.

Mac. Ye ha' hit it.

Crab. Why, what a superlative rascal art thou, thou inhospitable villain! Under the roof, and in the presence, of thy benefactor's representative, with almost his ill-bestowed bread in thy mouth, art thou plotting the perdition of his only child! And from what part of my life didst thou derive a hope of my compliance with such a hellish scheme?

Mac. Maister Crab, I am of a nation——

Crab. Of known honour and integrity—I allow it. The kingdom you have quitted, in consigning the care of its monarch, for ages, to your predecessors, in preference to its proper subjects, has given you a brilliant panegyric, that no other people can parallel.

Mac. Why, to se sure——

Crab. And one happiness it is, that though national glory can beam a brightness on particulars, the crimes of individuals can never reflect a disgrace upon their country. Thy apology but aggravates thy guilt.

Mac. Why, Maister Crab, I——

Crab. Guilt and confusion choak thy utterance! Avoid my sight! vanish! [*Exit* Mac.] A fine fellow this, to protect the person, inform the inexperience, direct and moderate the desires, of an unbridled boy! But can it be strange, whilst the parent negligently accepts a superficial recommendation to so important a trust, that the person, whose wants, perhaps, more than his abilities, make desirous of it, should consider the youth as a kind of property, and not study what to make him, but what to make of him; and thus prudently lay a foundation for his future sordid hopes, by a criminal compliance with the lad's present prevailing passions? But vice and folly rule the world—Without, there!

Enter Servant.

Rascal, where d'you run, blockhead? Bid the girl come hither.——Fresh instances, every moment, fortify my abhorrence, my detestation of mankind. This turn may be termed misanthropy, and imputed to chagrin and disappointment: but it can only be by those fools who, through softness or ignorance, regard the faults of others, like their own, through the wrong end of the perspective.

Enter LUCINDA.

So, what, I suppose your spirits are all afloat? You have heard your fellow's coming?

Luc. If you had your usual discernment, sir, you would distinguish in my countenance an expression very different from that of joy.

Crab. Oh, what! I suppose your monkey has broke his chain, or your parrot died in moulting?

Luc. A person less censorious than Mr Crab, might assign a more generous motive for my distress.

Crab. Distress! A pretty poetical phrase! What motive can'st thou have for distress? Has not sir John Buck's death assured thy fortune? and art not thou———

Luc. By that very means, a helpless, unprotected orphan.

Crab. Poh! prithee, wench, none of thy romantic cant to me. What, I know the sex: the objects of every woman's wish are property and power. The first you have, and the second you won't be long without; for here's a puppy riding post to put on your chains.

Luc. It would appear affectation not to understand you. And to deal freely, it was upon that subject I wished to engage you.

Crab. Your information was needless; I knew it.

Luc. Nay, but why so severe? I did flatter myself that the very warm recommendation of your deceased friend would have abated a little of that rigour.

Crab. No wheedling, Lucy. Age and contempt have long shut these gates against flattery and dissimulation. You have no sex for me. Without preface, speak your purpose.

Luc. What then, in a word, is your advice with regard to my marrying sir Charles Buck?

Crab. And do you seriously want my advice?

Luc. Most sincerely.

Crab. Then you are a blockhead! Why, where could you mend yourself? Is not he a fool, a fortune, and in love?—Look'e, girl.

Enter Servant.

Who, sent for you, sir?

Ser. Sir, my young master's post-chaise is broke down at the corner of the street by a coal-cart. His clothes are all dirt, and he swears like a trooper.

Crab. Ay'! Why, then, carry his chaise to the coach-maker's, his coat to a scowerer's, and him before a justice———Prithee, why dost trouble me? I suppose you would not meet your gallant?

Luc. Do you think I should?

Crab. No, retire. And if this application for my advice is not a copy of your countenance, a mask—if you are obedient, I may set you right.

Luc. I shall with pleasure follow your directions, [*Exit.*

Crab. Now we shall see what Paris has done for this puppy. But here he comes, light as the cork in his heels, or the feather in his hat.

Enter BUCK, LORD JOHN, LA LOIRE, BEARNOIS, *and* MACRUTHEN.

Buck. Not a word, mi Lor; *jernie*, it is not to be supported!—after being *rompu tout vif*, disjointed by that execrable *pave*, to be tumbled into a kennel by a filthy *charbonnier*, a dirty retailer of sea-coal, *morbleu!*

Lord John. An accident that might have happened any where, sir Charles.

Buck. And then the hideous hootings of that detestable *canaille*, that murtherous mob, with barbarous, 'Monsieur in the mud, huzza!' Ah, *pais sauvage, barbare, inhospitable!* Ah, ah, *qu'est ce-que nous avons?* Who?

Mac. That is Maister Crab, your father's executor.

Buck. Ha, ha, *Serviteur tres humble, Monsieur. Eh bien!* What? is he dumb? Mac, mi Lor, *mort de ma vie*, the veritable Jack-roast-beef of the French Comedy. Ha, ha! how do you do, Monsieur Jack-roast-beef?

Crab. Prithee take a turn or two about the room.

Buck. A turn or two! *Volontiers. Eh bien!* Well, have you, in your life, seen any thing so, ha, ha, hey?

Crab. Never. I hope you had not many spectators of your tumble?

Buck. *Pourquoi?* Why so?

Crab. Because I would not have the public curiosity forestalled. I can't but think, in a country so fond of strange sights, if you were kept up a little, you would bring a great deal of money.

Buck. I don't know, my dear, what my person would produce in this country, but the counterpart of your very grotesque figure has been extremely beneficial to the comedians from whence I came. *N'est-ce pas vrais*, mi lor? Ha, ha!

Lord John. The resemblance does not strike me. Perhaps I may seem singular; but the particular customs of particular countries, I own,

never appeared to me as proper objects of ridicule.

Buck. Why so?

Lord John. Because, in this case, it is impossible to have a rule for your judgment. The forms and customs which climate, constitution, and government, have given to one kingdom, can never be transplanted with advantage to another, founded on different principles. And thus, though the habits and manners of different countries may be directly opposite, yet, in my humble conception, they may be strictly, because naturally, right.

Crab. Why, there are some glimmerings of common sense about this young thing. Hark'e, child? by what accident did you stumble upon this blockhead?—[*To* BUCK.] I suppose the line of your understanding is too short to fathom the depth of your companion's reasoning?

Buck. My dear! [*Gapes.*

Crab. I say you can draw no conclusion from the above premises.

Buck. Who, I? Damn your premises and conclusions too! But this I conclude, from what I have seen, my dear, that the French are the first people in the universe; that, in the arts of living, they do, or ought to give laws to the whole world; and that, whosoever would either eat, drink, dress, dance, fight, sing, or even sneeze, *avec elegance*, must go to Paris to learn it. This is my creed.

Crab. And these precious principles you are come here to propagate?

Buck. C'est vrai, Monsieur Crab: and, with the aid of these brother missionaries, I have no doubt of making a great many proselytes. And now for a detail of their qualities. Bearnois, *avancez*! This is an officer of my household, unknown to this country.

Crab. And what may he be?—I'll humour the puppy.

Buck. This is my Swiss porter. *Tenez vous droit*, Bearnois. There's a fierce figure to guard the gate of an hotel.

Crab. What, do you suppose that we have no porters?

Buck. Yes, you have dunces that open doors; a drudgery that this fellow does by deputy. But for intrepidity in denying a disagreeable visitor; for politeness in introducing a mistress; acuteness in discerning, and constancy in excluding, a dun, a greater genius never came from the cantons.

Crab. Astonishing qualities!

Buck. *Retirez*, Bearnois. But here's a *bijou*, here's a jewel indeed! *Venez ici, mon cher* La Loire. *Comment trouvez vous ce Paris ici?*

La Loire. *Très bien.*

Buck. Very well. Civil creature! This, Monsieur Crab, is my cook La Loire; and for *hors d'œuvres, entre rotis, ragoûts, entremets*, and the disposition of a dessert, Paris never saw his parallel.

Crab. His wages, I suppose, are proportioned to his merit?

Buck. A bagatelle, a trifle. Abroad but a bare two hundred. Upon his cheerful compliance in coming hither into exile with me, I have indeed doubled his stipend.

Crab. You could do no less.

Buck. And now, sir, to complete my equipage, *regardez monsieur* La Jonquil, my first valet de chambre, excellent in every thing; but, *pour l'accommodage*, for decorating the head, inimitable. In one word, La Jonquil shall, for fifty to five, knot, twist, tie, frieze, cut, curl, or comb, with any garçon perruquier, from the Land's-end to the Orkneys.

Crab. Why, what an infinite fund of public spirit must you have, to drain your purse, mortify your inclination, and expose your person, for the mere improvement of your countrymen!

Buck. Oh, I am a very Roman for that. But at present I had another reason for returning.

Crab. Ay, what can that be?

Buck. Why, I find there is a likelihood of some little fracas between us. But, upon my soul, we must be very brutal to quarrel with the dear agreeable creatures for a trifle.

Crab. They have your affections, then?

Buck. De tout mon cœur. From the infinite civility shown to us in France, and their friendly professions in favour of our country, they can never intend us an injury.

Crab. Oh, you have hit their humour to a hair! But I can have no longer patience with the puppy. Civility and friendship, you booby! Yes, their civility at Paris has not left you a guinea in your pocket, nor would their friendship to your nation leave it a foot of land in the universe.

Buck. Lord John, this is a strange old fellow! Take my word for it, my dear, you mistake this thing egregiously. But all you English are constitutionally sullen. November-fogs, with salt boiled beef, are most cursed recipes for good-humour, or a quick apprehension. Paris is the place! 'Tis there men laugh, love, and live. *Vive l'amour! Sans amour, et sans ses desirs, un cœur est bien moins heureux quil ne pense.*

Crab. Now, would not any soul suppose, that this yelping hound had a real relish for the country he has quitted?

Buck. A mighty unnatural supposition, truly!

Crab. Foppery and affectation all.

Buck. And do you really think Paris a kind of purgatory, ha, my dear?

Crab. To thee the most solitary spot upon earth, my dear.—Familiar puppy!

Buck. Whimsical enough. But come, *pour passer le tems*, let us, old Diogenes, enter into a little debate. Mi lor, and you, Macruthen, determine the dispute between that source of de-

lights, *ce paradis de plaisir*, and this cave of care, this seat of scurvy and the spleen.

Mac. Let us heed them weel, my lord. Maister Crab has met with his match.

Buck. And first, for the great pleasure of life, the pleasure of the table: Ah, *quelle difference!* The ease, the wit, the wine, the *badinage*, the *persistage*, the *double entendre*, the *chansons à boire!* O what delicious moments have I passed *chez madame la duchesse de Barbouliac!*

Crab. Your mistress, I suppose?

Buck. Who, I? *Fi donc!* How is it possible for a woman to have a *penchant* for me? Hey, Mac!

Mac. Sir Charles is too much a man of honour to blab. But, to say truth, the whole city of Paris thought as much.

Crab. A precious fellow this!

Buck. Taisez vous, Mac. But we lose the point in view. Now, monsieur Crab, let me conduct you to what you call an entertainment. And first: the melancholy mistress is fixed in her chair, where, by the by, she is condemned to do more drudgery than a dray-horse. Next proceeds the master to marshal the guests; in which as much caution is necessary as at a coronation; with, 'My lady, sit here,' and, 'sir Thomas, sit 'there;' till the length of the ceremony, with the length of the grace, have destroyed all apprehensions of the meat's burning your mouths.

Mac. Bravo, bravo! Did I na say, sir Charles was a phenomenon?

Crab. Peace, puppy!

Buck. Then, in solemn silence, they proceed to demolish the substantials, with perhaps an occasional interruption of, 'Here's to you, friends;' 'Hob or nob;' 'Your love and mine.' Pork succeeds to beef, pyes to puddings. The cloth is removed. Madam, drenched with a bumper, drops a curtsey, and departs; leaving the jovial host, with his sprightly companions, to tobacco, port, and politics. *Voilà un repas à la mode d'Angleterre*, monsieur Crab.

Crab. It is a thousand pities that your father is not a living witness of these prodigious improvements.

Buck. C'est vrai. But, *à propos*, he is dead, as you say, and you are——

Crab. Against my inclination, his executor.

Buck. Peut-être; well, and——

Crab. Oh, my trust will soon determine. One article, indeed, I am strictly enjoined to see performed; your marriage with your old acquaintance Lucinda.

Buck. Ha, ha, *la petite Lucinde! et comment*——

Crab. Prithee, peace, and hear me. She is bequeathed conditionally, that if you refuse to marry her, twenty thousand pounds; and if she rejects you, which I suppose she will have the wisdom to do, only five.

Buck. Reject me! Very probable, hey, Mac? But could not we have an *entrevüe?*

Crab. Who's there?—Let Lucinda know we expect her.

Mac. Had na ye better, sir Charles, equip yoursell in a more suitable garb upon a first visit to your mistress?

Crab. Oh, such a figure and address can derive no advantage from dress.

Buck. Serviteur. But, however, Mac's hint may not be so *mal à propos. Allons*, Jonquil, *je m'en vais m'habiller.* Mi lor, shall I trespass upon your patience? My toilette is but a work of ten minutes. Mac, dispose of my domestics *a leur aise*, and then attend me with my portfeuille, and read, while I dress, those remarks I made in last voyage from Fountainbleu to Compeigne. *Serviteur, messieurs.*

Car le bon vin
Du matin,
Sortant du tonneau,
Vaut bien mieux que
Le Latin
De tout la Sorbonne. [*Exit.*

Crab. This is the most consummate coxcomb! I told the fool of a father what a puppy Paris would produce him; but travel is the word, and the consequence an importation of every foreign folly: And thus the plain persons and principles of old England are so confounded and jumbled with the excrementitious growth of every climate, that we have lost all our ancient characteristics, and are become a bundle of contradictions, a piece of patch-work, a mere harlequin's coat.

Lord John. Do you suppose then, sir, that no good may be obtained——

Crab. Why, prithee, what have you gained?

Lord John. I should be sorry my acquisitions were to determine the debate. But, do you think, sir, the shaking off some native qualities, and the being made more sensible, from comparison, of certain national and constitutional advantages, objects unworthy the attention?

Crab. You show the favourable side, young man: But how frequently are substituted for national prepossessions, always harmless, and often happy, guilty and unnatural prejudices? Unnatural! For the wretch who is weak and wicked enough to despise his country, sins against the most laudable law of nature; he is a traitor to the community where providence has placed him, and should be denied those social benefits he has rendered himself unworthy to partake. But sententious lectures are ill calculated for your time of life.

Lord John. I differ from you here, Mr Crab. Principles, that call for perpetual practice, cannot be too soon received. I sincerely thank

you, sir, for this communication, and should be happy to have always near me so moral a monitor.

Crab. You are indebted to France for her flattery. But I leave you with a lady, where it will be better employed.

Enter LUCINDA.

Crab. This young man waits here till your puppy is powdered. You may ask him after your French acquaintance. I know nothing of him; but he does not seem to be altogether so great a fool as your fellow. [*Exit.*

Luc. I am afraid, sir, you have had but a disagreeable *tête a tête.*

L. John. Just the contrary, madam. By good sense, tinged with singularity, we are entertained as well as improved. For a lady, indeed, Mr Crab's manners are rather too rough.

Luc. Not a jot; I am familiarized to them. I know his integrity, and can never be disobliged by his sincerity.

L. John. This declaration is a little particular from a lady, who must have received her first impressions in a place remarkable for its delicacy to the fair-sex. But good-sense can conquer even early habits.

Luc. This compliment I can lay no claim to. The former part of my life procured me but very little indulgence. The pittance of knowledge I possess, was taught me by a very severe mistress, Adversity. But you, sir, are too well acquainted with sir Charles Buck not to have known my situation.

L. John. I have heard your story, madam, before I had the honour of seeing you. It was affecting: You'll pardon the declaration: it now becomes interesting.—However, it is impossible I should not congratulate you on the near approach of the happy catastrophe.

Luc. Events that depend upon the will of another, a thousand unforeseen accidents may interrupt.

Lord John. Could I hope, madam, your present critical condition would acquit me of temerity, I should take the liberty to presume, if the suit of sir Charles be rejected——

Enter CRAB.

Crab. So, youngster! what, I suppose you are already practising one of your foreign lessons. Perverting the affections of a friend's mistress, or debauching his wife, are mere peccadilloes in modern morality—But at present, you are my care. That way conducts you to your fellow-traveller. [*Exit* LORD JOHN.]—I would speak with you in the library. [*Exit.*

Luc. I shall attend you, sir. Never was so unhappy an interruption! What could my lord mean? But be it what it will, it ought not, it cannot concern me.—Gratitude and duty demand my compliance with the dying wish of my benefactor, my friend, my father. But am I then to sacrifice all my future peace? But reason not, rash girl! obedience is thy province.

Though hard the task, be it my part to prove,
That sometimes duty can give laws to love.

ACT II.

SCENE—I.

BUCK *at his toilet, attended by three valets de chambre, and* MACRUTHEN.

Mac. NOTWITHSTANDING aw his plain dealing, I doubt whether maister Crab is so honest a man.

Buck. Pr'ythee. Mac, name not the monster. If I may be permitted a quotation from one of their paltry poets,

'Who is knight of the shire, represents them all.

Did ever mortal see such mirrors, such looking-glasses, as they have here too? One might as well address one's self for information to a bucket of water.—LA JONQUIL, *mettez-vous le rouge assez. He bien, Mac, miserable!* Hey?

Mac. 'Tis very becoming.

Buck. Ay, it will do for this place; I really could have forgiven my father's living a year or two longer, rather than be compelled to return to this——[*Enter* LORD JOHN.] My dear lord, *je demand mille pardons;* but the terrible fracas in my chaise, had so *gatéd* and disordered my hair, that it required an age to adjust it.

Lord John. No apology, sir Charles; I have been entertained very agreeably.

Buck. Who have you had, my dear lord, to entertain you?

Lord John. The very individual lady that's soon to make you a happy husband.

Buck. A happy who? husband?——What two very opposite ideas have you confounded ensemble!—In my conscience, I believe there's contagion in the clime, and mi lor is infected. But pray, mi dear lor, by what accident have you discovered that I was upon the point of becoming that happy——Oh, *un mari! diable!*

Lord John. The lady's beauty and merit, your inclinations, and your father's injunctions, made me conjecture that.

Buck. And can't you suppose that the lady's beauty may be possessed, her merit rewarded, and my inclinations gratified, without an absolute obedience to that fatherly injunction?

Lord John. It does not occur to me.

Buck. No, I believe not, mi lor. Those kind of talents are not given to every body. *Donnez moi mon manchon.* And now you shall see me manage the lady.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Young squire Racket and sir Toby Tallyhoe, who call themselves your honour's old acquaintances.

Buck. Oh the brutes! By what accident could they discover my arrival? Mi dear, dear lor, aid me to escape this embarras.

RACKET *and* TALLYHOE *without.*

Hoic a hoy, hoic a hoy!

Buck. Let me die if I do not believe the Hottentots have brought a whole hundred of hounds with them. But, they say, forms keep fools at a distance. I'll receive them *en ceremonie.*

Enter RACKET *and* TALLYHOE.

Tal. Hey boy; hoics, my little Buck!

Buck. *Monsieur le Chevalier, votres tres humble serviteur.*

Tal. Hey?

Buck. *Monsieur Racket, je suis charmé de vous voir.*

Rac. Anan! what?

Buck. *Ne m'entendez vous?* Don't you know French?

Rac. Know French! No, nor you neither, I think. Sir Toby, 'fore Gad, I believe the papists ha' bewitched him in foreign parts.

Tal. Bewitched, and transformed him too. Let me perish, Racket, if I don't think he's like one of the folks we used to read of at school, in Ovid's Metamorphosis; they have turned him into a beast!

Rac. A beast! No; a bird, you fool. Lookee, sir Toby, by the lord Harry, here are his wings!

Tal. Hey! ecod, and so they are, ha, ha! I reckon, Racket, he came over with the woodcocks.

Buck. *Voila des véritable Anglois.* The rustic, rude ruffians!

Rac. Let us see what the devil he has got upon his pole, sir Toby.

Tal. Ay.

Buck. Do, dear savage, keep your distance!

Tal. Nay, 'fore George we will have a scrutiny.

Rac. Ay, ay, a scrutiny.

Buck. *En grace,* La Jonquil! mi lor! protect me from these pirates!

Lord John. A little compassion, I beg, gentlemen.—Consider, sir Charles is upon a visit to his bride.

Tal. Bride! Zounds, he's fitter for a band-box —Racket, hocks the heels.

Rac. I have them, knight. 'Fore gad, he is the very reverse of a Bantam cock—His comb's on his feet, and his feathers on his head.——Who have we got here? What are these three fellows? Pastry-cooks?

Enter CRAB.

Crab. And is this one of your newly-acquired accomplishments, letting your mistress languish for a——but you have company, I see.

Buck. O yes; I have been inexpressibly happy.—These gentlemen are kind enough to treat me, upon my arrival, with what I believe they call, in this country, a route——My dear lor, if you don't favour my flight——But see if the toads an't tumbling my toilet!

Lord John. Now's your time, steal off.—I'll cover your retreat.

Buck. Mac, let La Jonquil follow to resettle my *cheveux.*——*Je vous remercie mille, mille fois, mon cher* mi lor.

Rac. Hola, sir Toby, stole away!

Buck. *O mon Dieu!*

Tal. Poh, rot him; let him alone. He'll never do for our purpose. You must know we intended to kick up a riot to-night at the playhouse, and we wanted him of the party; but that fop would swoon at the sight of a cudgel.

Lord John. Pray, sir, what is your cause of contention?

Tal. Cause of contention! Hey, faith, I know nothing of the matter. Racket, what is it we are angry about?

Rac. Angry about!—Why, you know we are to demolish the dancers.

Tal. True, true; I had forgot. Will you make one?

Lord John. I beg to be excused.

Rac. Mayhap you are a friend to the French?

Lord John. Not I, indeed, sir—But if the occasion will permit me a pun, though I am far from being a well-wisher to their arms, I have no objection to the being entertained by their legs.

Tal. Ay?—Why then, if you'll come to-night, you'll split your sides with laughing; for I'll be rot if we don't make them caper higher, and run faster, than ever they have done since the battle of Blenheim. Come along, Rackett.

[*Exit.*

Lord John. Was there ever such a contrast?

Crab. Not so remote as you imagine; they are scions from the same stock, set in different soils. The first shrub, you see, flowers most prodigally, but matures nothing; the last slip, though stunted, bears a little fruit; crabbed, 'tis true, but still the growth of the clime. Come, you'll follow your friend. [*Exit.*

Enter LUCINDA, *with a Servant.*

Luc. When Mr Crab or sir Charles inquire for

me, you will conduct them hither. [*Exit Servant.*] How I long for an end to this important interview! Not that I have any great expectations from the issue; but still in my circumstances a state of suspence is of all situations most disagreeable. But hush, they come.

Enter SIR CHARLES, MACRUTHEN, *Lord* JOHN *and* CRAB.

Buck. Mac, announce me.

Mac. Madam, sir Charles Buck craves the honour of kissing your hand.

Buck. *Tres humble serviteur. Et comment sa porte, Mademoiselle?* I am ravished to see thee, *ma chere petite Lucinde—Eh bien, ma reine!* Why you like divinely, child. But, *mon enfant*, they have dressed you most diabolically. Why what a *coiffeure* must you have! and, *oh mon Dieu!* a total absence of *rouge*. But perhaps you are out. I had a cargo from Deffreny the day of my departure: Shall I have the honour to supply you?

Luc. You are obliging, sir: but I confess myself a convert to the chaste customs of this country; and, with a commercial people, you know, sir Charles, all artifice——

Buck. Artifice! You mistake the point, *ma chere.* A proper portion of red is an indispensable part of your dress; and, in my private opinion, a woman might as well appear in public without powder or a petticoat.

Crab. And in my private opinion, a woman who puts on the first, would make very little difficulty in pulling off the last.

Buck. Oh, Monsieur Crab's judgment must be decisive in dress. Well, and what amusements, what spectacles, what parties, what contrivances, to conquer father Time, that foe to the fair? I fancy one must *ennuier considerablement* in your London here.

Luc. Oh, we are in no distress for diversions. We have an opera.

Buck. *Italien*, I suppose; *piticable*, shocking, *assommant!* Oh, there is no supporting their *hi, hi, hi, hi. Ah mon Dieu! Ah, chassé brilliant soleil,*

Brilliant soleil.
A-t-on jamais veu ton pareil?

There's music and melody.

Luc. What a fop!

Buck. But proceed, *ma princesse.*

Luc. Oh, then we have plays.

Buck. That I deny, child.

Luc. No plays!

Buck. No.

Luc. The assertion is a little whimsical.

Buck. Ay, that may be; you have here dramatic things, farcical in their composition, and ridiculous in their representation.

Luc. Sir, I own myself unequal to the controversy; but surely Shakespeare——My lord, this subject calls upon you for its defence.

Crab. I know from what fountain this fool has drawn his remarks; the author of the Chinese Orphan, in the preface to which Mr Voltaire calls the principal works of Shakespeare monstrous farces.

Lord John. Mr Crab is right, madam. Mr Voltaire has stigmatized with a very unjust and a very invidious appellation, the principal works of that great master of the passions; and his apparent motive renders him the more inexcuseable.

Luc. What could it be, my lord?

Lord John. The preventing his countrymen from becoming acquainted with our author, that he might be at liberty to pilfer from him with the greater security.

Luc. Ungenerous, indeed!

Buck. Palpable defamation.

Luc. And as to the exhibition, I have been taught to believe, that for a natural, pathetic, and spirited expression, no people upon earth—

Buck. You are imposed upon, child; the Lequesne, the Lanoue, the Grandval, the Dumenil, the Caussen, what dignity, what action! But, *à propos*, I have myself wrote a tragedy in French.

Luc. Indeed!

Buck. *En veritê*, upon Voltaire's plan.

Crab. That must be a precious piece of work.

Buck. It is now in repetition at the French comedie. Grandval and La Gaussen perform the principal parts. Oh, what an eclat! What a burst will it make in the parterre, when the king of Anannamaboo refuses the person of the princess of Cochineal!

Luc. Do you remember the passage?

Buck. Entire; and I believe I can convey it in their manner.

Luc. That will be delightful.

Buck. And first the king.

Ma chere princesse, je vous aime, c'est vrai;
De ma femme vous portez les charmants attraits.
Mais ce n'est pas honêtte pour un homme tel que moi,
De tromper ma femme, ou de rompre ma foi.

Luc. Inimitable!

Buck. Now the princess; she is, as you may suppose, in extreme distress.

Luc. No doubt.

Buck. *Mon grand roi, mon cher adorable,*
Ayez pitiê de moi, je suis inconsolable.
(Then he turns his back upon her; at which she, in a fury)
Monstre, ingrat, affreux, horrible, funeste,
Oh que je vous aime, ah que je vous deteste!
[Then he,]
Pensez vouz, Madame, à me donner la loi?
Vôtre haine, vôtre amour, sont les mêmes choses à moi.

Luc. Bravo!

Lord John. Bravo, bravo!

Buck. Ay, there's passion and poetry, and reason and rhime. Oh, how I detest blood and blank verse! There is something so soft, so musical, and so natural, in the rich rhimes of the *theatre Francois!*

Lord John. I did not know sir Charles was so totally devoted to the belles lettres.

Buck. Oh, entirely. 'Tis the ton, the taste. I am every night at the *Coffè Procope;* and had not I had the misfortune to be born in this curst country, I make no doubt but you would have seen my name among the foremost of the French academy.

Crab. I should think you might easily get over that difficulty, if you will be but so obliging us publicly to renounce us. I dare engage not one of your countrymen should contradict or claim you.

Buck. No!—Impossible. From the barbarity of my education, I must ever be taken for *un Anglois.*

Crab. Never.

Buck. *En verité?*

Crab. *En verité.*

Buck. You flatter me?

Crab. But common justice.

Mac. Nay, Maister Crab is in the right; for I have often heard the French themselves say, is it possible that gentleman can be British?

Buck. Obliging creatures! And you all concur with them?

Crab. Entirely.

Luc. Entirely.

Lord John. Entirely.

Buck. How happy you make me!

Crab. Egregious puppy! But we lose time. A truce to this trumpery. You have read your father's will?

Buck. No; I read no English. When Mac has turned it into French, I may run over the items.

Crab. I have told you the part that concerns this girl. And as your declaration upon it will discharge me, I leave you to what you will call an *eclaircissement.* Come, my Lord.

Buck. Nay, but Monsieur Crab, mi Lor, Mac!

Crab. Along with us.

[*Exeunt* CRAB *and* LORD JOHN.

Buck. A comfortable scrape I am in! What the deuce am I to do? In the language of the place, I am to make love, I suppose. A pretty employment!

Luc. I fancy my hero is a little puzzled with his part. But now for it.

Buck. A queer creature, that Crab, *ma petite.* But, *à propos,* How d'you like my lord?

Luc. He seems to have good sense, and good breeding.

Buck. *Pas trop.* But don't you think he has something of a foreign kind of air about him?

Luc. Foreign!

Buck. Ay, something so English in his manner?

Luc. Foreign and English! I don't comprehend you.

Buck. Why that is, he has not the ease, the *je ne scai quoi,* the *bon ton.*—In a word, he does not resemble me now.

Luc. Not in the least.

Buck. Oh, I thought so. He is to be pitied, poor devil; he can't help it. But, *entre nous, ma chere,* the fellow has a fortune.

Luc. How does that concern me, sir Charles?

Buck. Why, *je pense, ma reine,* that your eyes have done execution there.

Luc. My eyes execution!

Buck. Ay, child, is there any thing so extraordinary in that? *Ma foi,* I thought, by the vivacity of his praise, that he had already summoned the garrison to surrender.

Luc. To carry on the allusion, I believe my lord is too good a commander to commence a fruitless siege. He could not but know the condition of the town.

Buck. Condition! Explain, *ma chere.*

Luc. I was in hopes your interview with Mr Crab had made that unnecessary.

Buck. Oh, ay, I do recollect something of a ridiculous article about marriage in a will. But what a plot against the peace of two poor people! Well, the malice of some men is amazing! Not contented with doing all the mischief they can in their life, they are for entailing their malevolence, like their estates, to latest posterity.

Luc. Your contempt of me, sir Charles, I receive as a compliment. But the infinite obligations I owe to the man who had the misfortune to call you son, compel me to insist, that, in my presence at least, no indignity be offered to his memory.

Buck. Heyday! What, in heroics, *ma reine?*

Luc. Ungrateful, unfilial wretch! so soon to trample on his ashes, the greatest load of whose fond heart, in his last hour, were his fears for thy future welfare.

Buck. *Ma foi, elle est folle;* she is mad, *sans doute.*

Luc. But I am to blame. Can he, who breaks through one sacred relation, regard another? Can the monster, who is corrupt enough to contemn the place of his birth, reverence those who gave him being?—Impossible.

Buck. Ah, a pretty monologue! a fine soliloquy this, child.

Luc. Contemptible! But I am cool.

Buck. I am mightily glad of it. Now we shall understand one another, I hope.

Luc. We do understand one another. You have already been kind enough to refuse me. Nothing is wanting but a formal rejection

under your hand, and so concludes our acquaintance.

Buck. *Vous allez trop vite ;* you are too quick, *ma chere.* If I recollect, the consequence of this rejection is my paying you twenty thousand pounds.

Luc. True.

Buck. Now that, have not I the least inclination to do.

Luc. No, sir ? Why you own that marriage———

Buck. Is my aversion. I'll give you that under my hand, if you please; but I have a prodigious love for the louis.

Luc. Oh, we'll soon settle that dispute; the law—

Buck. But, hold, *ma reine.* I don't find that my provident father has precisely determined the time of this comfortable conjunction. So, though I am condemned, the day of execution is not fixed.

Luc. Sir !

Buck. I say, my soul, there goes no more to your dying a maid, than my living a bachelor.

Luc. O, sir, I shall find a remedy.

Buck. But now suppose, *ma belle,* I have found one to your hand ?

Luc. As how ? Name one.

Buck. I'll name two. And first, *mon enfante,* though I have an irresistible antipathy to the conjugal knot, yet I am by no means blind to your personal charms : in the possession of which if you please to place me, not only the aforesaid twenty thousand pounds, but the whole *terre* of your devoted shall fall at your—

Luc. Grant me patience !

Buck. Indeed you want it, my dear. But if you flounce, I fly.

Luc. Quick, sir, your other ! For this is—

Buck. I grant, not quite so fashionable as my other. It is then, in a word, that you would let this lubberly lord make you a lady, and appoint me his assistant, his private friend, his *cisisbei.* And as we are to be joint partakers of your person, let us be equal sharers in your fortune, *ma belle.*

Luc. Thou mean, abject, mercenary thing ! Thy mistress ! Gracious Heaven !—Universal empire should not bribe me to be thy bride.—And what apology, what excuse, could a woman of the least sense or spirit make for so unnatural a connection !

Buck. *Fort bien !*

Luc. Where are thy attractions ? Canst thou be weak enough to suppose thy frippery dress, thy affectation, thy grimace, could influence beyond the borders of a brothel ?

Buck. *Très bien !*

Luc. And what are thy improvements ? Thy air is a copy from thy barber; for thy dress thou art indebted to thy tailor. Thou hast lost thy native language, and brought home none in exchange for it.

Buck. *Extremément bien !*

Luc. Had not thy vanity so soon exposed thy villany, I might, in reverence to that name, to which thou art a disgrace, have taken a wretched chance with thee for life.

Buck. I am obliged to thee for that; and a pretty pacific partner I should have had. Why, look'e, child, you have been, to be sure, very eloquent, and, upon the whole, not unentertaining : though, by the by, you have forgot in your catalogue one of my foreign acquisitions; *c'est à dire,* that I can, with a most intrepid *sang froid,* without a single emotion, support all this storm of female fury. But, *adieu, ma belle ;* and when a cool hour of reflection has made you sensible of the propriety of my proposals, I shall expect the honour of a card.

[*Exit.*

Luc. I am ashamed this thing has had the power to move me thus. Who waits there ? Desire Mr Crab———

Enter LORD JOHN *and* CRAB.

Lord John. We have been unwillingly, madam, silent witnesses to this shameful scene. I blush, that a creature, who wears the outward marks of humanity, should be in his morals so much below——

Crab. Prithee, why didst thou not call thy maids, and toss the booby in a blanket ?

Lord John. If I might be permitted, madam, to conclude what I intended saying, when interrupted by Mr Crab———

Luc. My lord, don't think me guilty of affectation; I believe I guess at your generous design : but my temper is really so ruffled—besides, I am meditating a piece of female revenge on this coxcomb.

Lord John. Dear madam, can I assist ?

Luc. Only by desiring my maid to bring hither the tea. My lord, I am confounded at the liberty, but——

Lord John. No apology——You honour me, madam. [*Exit.*

Crab. And, prithee, wench, what is thy scheme ?

Luc. Oh, a very harmless one, I promise you.

Crab. Zounds, I am sorry for it. I long to see the puppy severely punished, methinks.

Luc. Sir Charles, I fancy, can't be yet got out of the house. Will you desire him to step hither ?

Crab. I'll bring him.

Luc. No, I wish to have him alone.

Crab. Why, then, I'll send him.

[*Exit.*

Enter LETTICE.

Luc. Place these things on the table, a chair on each side——very well. Do you keep within call. But hark, he is here. Leave me, Lettice.

[*Exit.*

Enter BUCK.

Buck. So, so, I thought she would come to; but, I confess, not altogether so soon. *Eh bien, ma belle,* see me ready to receive your commands.

Luc. Pray, be seated, sir Charles. I am afraid the natural warmth of my temper might have hurried me into some expressions not altogether so suitable.

Buck. Ah, *bagatelle.* Name it not.

Luc. Will you drink tea, sir?

Buck. Volontiers. This tea is a pretty innocent kind of beverage; I wonder the French don't take it. I have some thoughts of giving it a fashion next winter.

Luc. That will be very obliging. It is of extreme service to the ladies this side of the water, you know.

Buck. True, it promotes parties, and infuses a kind of spirit into conversation. But what has occasioned me, *ma reine,* the honour of your message by Mr Crab?

Luc. The favours I have received from your family, sir Charles, I thought demanded from me, at my quitting your house, a more decent and ceremonious adieu than our last interview would admit of.

Buck. Is that all, *ma chere?* I thought your flinty heart had at last relented. Well, *ma reine,* adieu!

Luc. Can you, then, leave me?

Buck. The fates will have it so.

Luc. Go then, perfidious traitor, be gone! I have this consolation, however, that if I cannot legally possess you, no other woman shall.

Buck. Hey, how, what!

Luc. And though the pleasure of living with you is denied me, in our deaths, at least, we shall soon be united.

Buck. Soon be united in death! When, child?

Luc. Within this hour.

Buck. Which way?

Luc. The fatal draught's already at my heart. I feel it here; it runs through every pore.——Pangs, pangs, unutterable! The tea we drank, urged by despair and love—Oh!

Buck. Well!

Luc. I poisoned——

Buck. The devil!

Luc. And as my generous heart would have shared all with you, I gave you half.

Buck. Oh, curse your generosity!

Luc. Indulge me in the cold comfort of a last embrace.

Buck. Embrace! O, confound you! But it may not be too late. Macruthen, Jonquil, physicians, apothecaries, oil, and antidotes.——Oh, *Je meurs, je meurs! Ah, la diablesse?*

[*Exit* BUCK.

Enter LORD JOHN *and* CRAB.

Crab. A brave wench! I could kiss thee for this contrivance.

Lord John. He really deserves it all.

Crab. Deserves it! Hang him. But the sensible resentment of this girl has almost reconciled me to the world again. But stay, let us see—Can't we make a farther use of the puppy's punishment? I suppose we may very safely depend on your contempt of him?

Luc. Most securely.

Crab. And this young thing here has been breathing passions and protestations. But I'll take care my girl shan't go a beggar to any man's bed. We must have this twenty thousand pound, Lucy.

Lord John. I regard it not. Let me be happy, and let him be————

Crab. Pshaw, don't scorch me with thy flames. Reserve your raptures; or, if they must have vent, retire into that room, whilst I go plague the puppy.

[*Exit* CRAB *one way,* LUCY *and* LORD JOHN *another.*

SCENE II.—*Changes and discovers* BUCK, MACRUTHEN, JONQUIL, BEARNOIS, LA LOIRE, *Physician and Surgeon.* BUCK *in a night-cap and gown.*

Sur. This copious phlebotomy will abate the inflammation; and if the six blisters on your head and back rise, why there may be hopes.

Buck. Cold comfort. I burn, I burn, I burn! Ah, there is a shoot! And now again, I freeze!

Mac. Ay, They are aw symptoms of a strong poison.

Buck. Oh, I am on the rack!

Mac. Oh, if it be got to the vitals, a fig for aw antidotes.

Enter CRAB.

Crab. Where is this miserable devil? What, is he alive still!

Mac. In gude troth, and that's aw.

Buck. Oh!

Crab. So, you have made a pretty piece of work on't, young man!

Buck. O, what could provoke me to return from Paris!

Crab. Had you never been there, this could not have happened.

Enter RACKET *and* TALLYHOE.

Rack. Where is he? He's a dead man; his eyes are fixed already.

Buck. Oh!

Tal. Who poisoned him, Racket?

Rack. Gad I don't know. His French cook, I reckon.

Crab. Were there a possibility of thy reformation, I have yet a secret to restore thee.

Buck. Oh, give it, give it!

Crab. Not so fast. It must be on good conditions.

Buck. Name them. Take my estate, my—save but my life, take all.

Crab. First, then, renounce thy right to that lady, whose just resentment has drawn this punishment upon thee, and in which she is an unhappy partaker.

Buck. I renounce her from my soul.

Crab. To this declaration you are witnesses. Next, your tawdry trappings, your foreign foppery, your washes, paints, pomades, must blaze before your door.

Buck. What, all?

Crab. All; not a rag shall be reserved. The execution of this part of your sentence shall be assigned to your old friends here.

Buck. Well, take them.

Crab. And, lastly, I'll have these exotic attendants, these instruments of your luxury, these pandars to your pride, packed in the first cart, and sent post to the place from whence they came.

Buck. Spare me but La Jonquil!

Crab. Not an instant. The importation of these puppies makes a part of the politics of your old friends the French; unable to resist you, whilst you retain your ancient roughness, they have recourse to these minions, who would first, by unmanly means, sap and soften all your native spirit, and then deliver you an easy prey to their employers.

Buck. Since, then, it must be so, adieu, La Jonquil!!! [*Exeunt Servants.*

Crab. And now to the remedy. Come forth, Lucinda.

Enter LUCINDA *and* LORD JOHN.

Buck. Hey, why did not she swallow the poison?

Crab. No; nor you neither, you blockhead.

Buck. Why, did not I leave you in pangs?

Luc. Ay, put on. The tea was innocent, upon my honour, sir Charles. But you allow me to be an excellent *actrice.*

Buck. Oh, curse your talents!

Crab. This fellow's public renunciation has put your person and fortune in your power; and if you were sincere in your declaration of being directed by me, bestow it there.

Luc. As a proof of my sincerity, my lord, receive it.

Lord John. With more transport than sir Charles the news of his safety!

Luc. [*To* BUCK.] You are not at present in a condition to take possession of your post.

Buck. What?

Luc. Oh, you recollect! my lord's private friend; his assistant, you know.

Buck. Oh, oh!

Mac. But, sir Charles, as I find the affair of the poison was but a joke, had na' ye better withdraw, and tak off your blisters?

Crab. No, let them stick. He wants them.—And now concludes my care. But, before we close the scene, receive, young man, this last advice from the old friend of your father: As it is your happiness to be born a Briton, let it be your boast; know, that the blessings of liberty are your birth-right, which, while you preserve, other nations may envy or fear, but never conquer or contemn you. Believe, that French fashions are as ill suited to the genius, as their politics are pernicious to the peace, of your native land.

A convert to these sacred truths, you'll find
That poison, for your punishment designed,
Will prove a wholesome medicine to your mind.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

AUTHOR.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

GOVERNOR CAPE.
YOUNG CAPE, *his son (the Author) attached to* ARABELLA.
SPRIGHTLY, *friend to* YOUNG CAPE.
CADWALLADER, *an eccentric Welchman.*
VAMP, *a bookseller.*
ROBIN, *servant to* YOUNG CAPE.
Poet.
Printer's Devil.

WOMEN.

MRS CADWALLADER.
ARABELLA, *sister to* CADWALLADER.

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

GOVERNOR CAPE *and* ROBIN.

Gov. AND he believes me dead, Robin?

Rob. Most certainly.

Gov. You have given him no intimation that his fortunes might mend?

Rob. Not a distant hint.

Gov. How did he receive the news?

Rob. Calmly enough: when I told him that his hopes from abroad were at an end, that the friend of his deceased father thought he had done enough in putting it in his power to earn his own livelihood, he replied, 'twas no more than he had long expected, charged me with his warmest acknowledgements to his concealed benefactor, thanked me for my care, sighed, and left me.

Gov. And how has he lived since?

Rob. Poorly, but honestly: to his pen he owes all his subsistence. I am sure my heart bleeds for him: consider, sir, to what temptations you expose him.

Gov. The severer his trials, the greater his triumph. Shall the fruits of my honest industry, the purchase of so many perils, be lavished on a lazy, luxurious booby, who has no other merit than being born five-and-twenty years after me? No, no, Robin; him, and a profusion of debts, were all that the extravagance of his mother left me.

Rob. You loved her, sir?

Gov. Fondly, nay foolishly, or necessity had not compelled me to seek for shelter in another climate. 'Tis true, fortune has been favourable to my labours; and when George convinces me, that he inherits my spirit, he shall share my property; not else.

Rob. Consider, sir, he has not your opportunities.

Gov. Nor had I his education.

Rob. As the world goes, the worst you could have given him. Lack-a-day! Learning, learning, sir, is no commodity for this market: nothing makes money here, sir, but money; or some certain fashionable qualities that you would not wish your son to possess.

Gov. Learning useless! Impossible! Where are the Oxfords, the Halifaxes, the great protectors and patrons of the liberal arts?

Rob. Patron! The world has lost its use; a guinea-subscription at the request of a lady, whose chambermaid is acquainted with the author, may be now and then picked up—Protector! Why, I dare believe there's more money laid out upon Islington turnpike, in a month, than upon all the learned men in Great Britain in seven years.

Gov. And yet the press groans with their productions! How do they all exist?

Rob. In garrets, sir; as, if you will step to your son's apartment, in the next street, you will see.

Gov. But what apology shall we make for the visit?

Rob. That you want the aid of his profession; a well-penned address, now, from the subjects of your late government, with your gracious reply, to put into the newspapers.

Gov. Ay! is that part of his practice? Well, lead on, Robin. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Draws, and discovers* YOUNG CAPE *with the* PRINTER'S DEVIL.

Cape. Prithee, go about thy business—vanish, dear devil.

Devil. Master bid me not come without the proof; he says as how there are two other answers ready for the press; and if yours don't come out a Saturday, 'twont pay for the paper. But you are always so lazy; I have more plague with you———there's Mr Guzzle, the translator, never keeps me a minute—unless the poor gentleman happens to be fuddled.

Cape. Why, you little, sooty, snivelling, diabolical puppy, is it not sufficient to be plagued with the stupidity of your absurd master, but I must be pestered with your impertinence?

Devil. Impertinence! Marry come up, I keep as good company as your worship every day in the year——there's Mr Clench, in Little Britain, does not think it beneath him to take part of a pot of porter with me, though he has wrote two volumes of Lives in quarto, and has a folio a-coming out in numbers.

Cape. Hark'e, sirrah, if you don't quit the room this instant, I'll show you a shorter way into the street, than the stairs.

Devil. I shall save you the trouble; give me the French book that you took the story from for the last journal.

Cape. Take it———

[*Throws it at him.*

Devil. What, d'ye think it belongs to the circulating library, or that it is one of your own performances, that you———

Cape. You shall have a larger—[*Exit Devil.*]—'Sdeath! a pretty situation I am in! And are these the fruits I am to reap from a long, laborious, and expensive——

Re-enter Devil.

Devil. I had like to have forgot; here's your week's pay for the newspaper, five and fivepence; which, with the two-and-a-penny master passed his word for to Mrs Suds, your washerwoman, makes the three half-crowns.

Cape. Lay it on the table.

Devil. Here's a man on the stairs wants you; by the sheepishness of his looks, and the shabbiness of his dress, he's either a pick-pocket or a poet—Here, walk in, Mr What-d'ye-call-um, the gentleman's at home.

[*Surveys the figure, laughs, and exit.*

Enter POET.

Poet. Your name, I presume, is Cape?

Cape. You have hit it, sir.

Poet. Sir, I beg pardon; you are a gentleman that writes?

Cape. Sometimes.

Poet. Why, sir, my case, in a word, is this: I, like you, have long been a retainer of the Muses, as you may see by their livery.

Cape. They have not discarded you, I hope?

Poet. No, sir; but their upper servants, the booksellers, have—I printed a collection of jests upon my own account, and they have ever since refused to employ me; you, sir, I hear, are in their graces: now I have brought you, sir, three imitations of Juvenal in prose; Tully's oration for Milo, in blank verse; two essays on the British herring-fishery, with a large collection of rebuses; which, if you will dispose of to them, in your own name, we'll divide the profits.

Cape. I am really, sir, sorry for your distress; but I have a larger cargo of my own manufacturing, than they choose to engage in.

Poet. That's pity; you have nothing in the compiling or index way, that you would entrust to the care of another?

Cape. Nothing.

Poet. I'll do it at half price.

Cape. I'm concerned it is not in my power, at present, to be useful to you; but if this trifle—

Poet. Sir, your servant. Shall I leave you any of my———

Cape. By no means.

Poet. An essay or an ode?

Cape. Not a line.

Poet. Your very obedient———

[*Exit* POET.

Cape. Poor fellow! And how far am I removed from his condition? Virgil had his Pollio; Horace his Mæcenas; Martial his Pliny. My protectors are, Title-page the publisher, Vamp the bookseller, and Index the printer. A most noble triumvirate! and the rascals are as proscriptive and arbitrary as the famous Roman one, into the bargain.

Enter SPRIGHTLY.

Spright. What! in soliloquy, George? reciting some of the pleasantries, I suppose, in your new piece?

Cape. My disposition has at present very little of the *vis comica.*

Spright. What's the matter?

Cape. Survey that mass of wealth upon the table; all my own, and earned in little more than a week.

Spright. Why, 'tis an inexhaustible mine!

Cape. Ay; and delivered to me, too, with all the soft civility of Billingsgate, by a printer's prime minister, called a devil.

Spright. I met the imp upon the stairs. But I thought these midwives to the muses were the idolizers of you, their favourite sons.

Cape. Our tyrants, Tom! Had I indeed a posthumous piece of infidelity, or an amorous novel, decorated with luscious copper-plates, the slaves would be civil enough.

Spright. Why don't you publish your own works?

Cape. What! And paper my room with them? No, no, that will never do; there are secrets in all trades: ours is one great mystery; but the explanation would be too tedious at present.

Spright. Then why don't you divert your attention to some other object?

Cape. That subject was employing my thoughts.

Spright. How have you resolved?

Cape. I have, I think, at present, two strings to my bow: if my comedy succeeds, it buys me a commission; if my mistress, my Laura, proves kind, I am settled for life; but if both my cords snap—adieu to the quill, and welcome the musket.

Spright. Heroically determined! But, *a-propos*, how proceeds your honourable passion?

Cape. But slowly; I believe I have a friend in her heart, but a most potent enemy in her head: you know I am poor, and she is prudent. With regard to her fortune, too, I believe her brother's consent is essentially necessary——But you promised to make me acquainted with him.

Spright. I expect him here every instant. He may, George, be useful to you in more than one capacity; if your comedy is not crowded, he is a character, I can tell you, that will make no contemptible figure in it.

Cape. His sister gave me a sketch of him last summer.

Spright. A sketch can never convey him. His peculiarities require infinite labour, and high finishing.

Cape. Give me the outlines.

Spright. He is a compound of contrarieties; pride and meanness, folly and archness: at the same time that he would take the wall of a prince of the blood, he would not scruple eating a fried sausage at the Mews-gate. There is a minuteness, now and then, in his descriptions, and some whimsical, unaccountable turns in his conversation, that are entertaining enough; but the extravagance and oddity of his manner, and the boast of his birth, complete his character.

Cape. But how will a person of his pride and pedigree, relish the humility of this apartment?

Spright. Oh, he's prepared—you are, George, though prodigiously learned and ingenious, an abstracted being, odd and whimsical; the case with all your great geniuses: you love the snug, the chimney-corner of life; and retire to this obscure nook, merely to avoid the importunity of the great.

Cape. Your servant——But what attraction can a character of this kind have for Mr Cadwallader?

Spright. Infinite! next to a peer, he honours a poet; and modestly imputes his not making a figure in the learned world himself, to the neglect of his education—Hush! he's on the stairs—On with your cap, and open your book. Remember great dignity and absence.

Enter VAMP.

Cape. Oh, no; 'tis Mr Vamp. Your commands, good sir?

Vamp. I have a word, Mr Cape, for your private ear.

Cape. You may communicate; this gentleman is a friend.

Vamp. An author?

Cape. Voluminous.

Vamp. In what way?

Cape. Universal.

Vamp. Bless me! he's very young, and exceedingly well rigged; what, a good subscription, I reckon?

Cape. Not a month from Leyden; an admirable theologist! he studied it in Germany; if you should want such a thing, now, as ten or a dozen manuscript sermons, by a deceased clergyman, I believe he can supply you.

Vamp. Warranted originals?

Cape. No.

Vamp. No, no; I don't deal in the sermon-way, now; I lost money by the last I printed, for all 'twas wrote by a methodist; but I believe, sir, if they ben't long, and have a good deal of Latin in them, I can get you a chap.

Spright. For what, sir?

Vamp. The manuscript sermons you have wrote, and want to dispose of.

Spright. Sermons that I have wrote!

Vamp. Ay, ay; Mr Cape has been telling me———

Spright. He has? I am mightily obliged to him.

Vamp. Nay, nay; don't be afraid; I'll keep counsel; old Vamp had not kept a shop so long at the Turnstile, if he did not know how to be secret. Why, in the year fifteen, when I was in the treasonable way, I never squeaked; I never gave up but one author in my life, and he was dying of a consumption; so it never came to a trial.

Spright. Indeed!

Vamp. Never; look here—[*Shows the side of his head.*]—cropped close! bare as a board! and for nothing in the world but an innocent book of bawdy, as I hope for mercy: oh! the laws are very hard, very severe upon us.

Spright. You have given me, sir, so positive a proof of your secrecy, that you may rely upon my communication.

Vamp. You will be safe—but, gadso! we must mind business, though. Here, Mr Cape, you must provide me with three taking titles for these pamphlets; and if you can think of a pat Latin motto for the largest———

Cape. They shall be done.

Vamp. Do so, do so. Books are like women, Mr Cape; to strike, they must be well-dressed: fine feathers make fine birds; a good paper, an elegant type, a handsome motto, and a catching title, has drove many a dull treatise through three editions—Did you know Harry Handy?

Spright. Not that I recollect.

Vamp. He was a pretty fellow; he had his Latin *ad unguem*, as they say; he would have turned you a fable of Dryden's, or an epistle of Pope's, into Latin verse in a twinkling: except Peter Hasty the voyage-writer, he was as great a loss to the trade as any within my memory.

Cape. What carried him off?

Vamp. A halter—hanged for clipping and coining, Mr Cape. I thought there was something the matter by his not coming to our shop for a month or two: he was a pretty fellow!

Spright Were you a great loser by his death?

Vamp. I can't say—as he had taken to another course of living, his execution made a noise; it sold me seven hundred of his translations, besides his last dying speech and confession; I got it; he was mindful of his friends in his last moments: he was a pretty fellow!

Cape. You have no farther commands, Mr Vamp?

Vamp. Not at present; about the spring I'll deal with you, if we can agree, for a couple of volumes in octavo.

Spright. Upon what subject?

Vamp. I leave that to him; Mr Cape knows what will do, though novels are a pretty light summer-reading, and do very well at Tunbridge, Bristol, and the other watering places: no bad commodity for the West India trade neither; let them be novels, Mr Cape.

Cape. You shall be certainly supplied.

Vamp. I doubt not; pray, how does Index go on with your Journal?

Cape. He does not complain.

Vamp. Ah, I knew the time—but you have overstocked the market. Titlepage and I had once like to have engaged in a paper. We had got a young Cantab for the essays; a pretty historian from Aberdeen; and an attorney's clerk for the true intelligence: but, I don't know how, it dropped for want of a politician.

Cape. If in that capacity I can be of any—

Vamp. No, thank you, Mr Cape: in half a year's time, I have a grandson of my own that will come in; he is now in training as a waiter at the Cocoa-tree coffee-house; I intend giving him the run of Jonathan's for three months, to understand trade and the funds; and then I'll start him—No, no; you have enough on your hands; stick to your business; and, d'ye hear, 'ware clipping and coining; remember Harry Handy: he was a pretty fellow! [*Exit* VAMP.

Spright. And I'm sure thou art a most extraordinary fellow! But prithee, George, what could provoke thee to make me a writer of sermons?

Cape. You seemed desirous of being acquainted with our business, and I knew old Vamp would let you more into the secret in five minutes, than I could in as many hours.

[*Knocking below, loud.*

Spright. Cape, to your post; here they are, i'faith, a coachful! Let's see, Mr and Mrs Cadwallader, and your flame, the sister, as I live!

Cad. [*Without.*] Pray, by the by, han't you a poet above?

[*Without.*] Higher up.

Cad. [*Without.*] Egad, I wonder what makes your poets have such an aversion to middle floors—they are always to be found in extremities; in garrets, or cellars—

Enter MR *and* MRS CADWALLADER, *and* ARABELLA.

Cad. Ah, Sprightly!

Spright. Hush!

Cad. Hey, what's the matter?

Spright. Hard at it; untwisting some knotty point; totally absorbed!

Cad. Gadso! what! that's he! Beck, Bell, there he is, egad, as great a poet, and as ingenious a— what's he about?—Hebrew?

Spright. Weaving the whole Æneid into a tragedy; I have been here this half hour, but he has not marked me yet.

Cad. Could not I take a peep?

Spright. An earthquake would not rouse him.

Cad. He seems in a damned passion.

Cape. The belt of Pallas, nor prayers, nor tears, nor supplicating gods, shall save thee now.

Cad. Hey! zounds! what the devil! who?

Cape. *Pallas! te hoc vulnere, Pallas immolat, et pœnam scelerato ex sanguine sumit!*

Cad. Damn your palace! I wish I was well out of your garret!

Cape. Sir, I beg ten thousand pardons: ladies, your most devoted. You will excuse me, sir; but, being just on the catastrophe of my tragedy, I am afraid the poetic furor may have betrayed me into some indecency.

Spright. Oh, Mr Cadwallader is too great a genius himself, not to allow for these intemperate sallies of a heated imagination.

Cad. Genius! Look you here! Mr What's-your-name?

Cape. Cape.

Cad. Cape! true; though by the by here, hey! you live devilish high; but perhaps you may chuse that for exercise, hey! Sprightly! Genius! Look'e here, Mr Cape, I had as pretty natural parts, as fine talents!—but, between you and I, I had as damned fool of a guardian, an ignorant, illiterate, ecod—he could as soon pay the national debt as write his own name, and so was resolved to make his ward no wiser than himself, I think.

Spright. O fie, Mr Cadwallader, you don't do yourself justice.

Cape. Indeed, sir, we must contradict you, we can't suffer this defamation. I have more than once heard Mr Cadwallader's literary acquisitions loudly talked of.

Cad. Have you?—no, no, it cannot be, hey! though, let me tell you, last winter, before I had the measles, I could have made as good a speech, upon any subject, in Italian, French, German—but I am all unhinged!—all—Oh, Lord, Mr Cape, this is Becky; my dear Becky, child, this is a great poet—ah, but she does not know what that is—a little foolish or so, but of a very good family—here, Becky, child, won't you ask Mr Cape to come and see you?

Mrs Cad. As Dicky says, I shall be glad to see you at our house, sir.

Cape. I have too great a regard for my own happiness, madam, to miss so certain an opportunity of creating it.

Mrs Cad. Hey! what?

Cape. My inclinations, as well as my duty, I say, will compel me to obey your kind injunctions.

Mrs Cad. What does he say, our Bell?

Ara. Oh, that he can have no greater pleasure than waiting on you.

Mrs Cad I'm sure that's more his goodness than my desert; but when you ben't better engaged, we should be glad of your company of an evening, to make one with our Dicky, sister Bell, and I, at whisk and swabbers.

Cad. Hey, ecod, do, Cape, come and look at her grotto and shells, and see what she has got—Well, he'll come, Beck—ecod, do, and she'll come to the third night of your tragedy, hey! won't you, Beck? Isn't she a fine girl? hey, you; humour her a little, do—Hey, Beck! he says you are as fine a woman as ever he—ecod, who knows but he may make a copy of verses on you?—There, go and have a little chat with her, talk any nonsense to her, no matter what; she's a damned fool, and won't know the difference—there, go, Beck—Well, Sprightly, hey! what! are you and Bell like to come together? Oh, ecod, they tell me, Mr Sprightly, that you have frequently lords, and viscounts, and earls, that take a dinner with you; now I should look upon it as a very particular favour, if you would invite me at the same time, hey! will you?

Spright. You may depend on it.

Cad. Will you? Gad, that's kind: for between you and I, Mr Sprightly, I am of as ancient a family as the best of them; and people of fashion should know one another, you know.

Spright. By all manner of means.

Cad. Hey! should not they so? When you have any lord or baron, nay, egad, if it be but a baronet or a member of parliament, I should take it as a favour.

Spright. You will do them honour; they must all have heard of the antiquity of your house.

Cad. Antiquity! hey! Beck, where's my pedigree?

Mrs Cad. Why, at home, locked up in the butler's pantry.

Cad. In the pantry! What the devil! how often have I bid you never come out without it?

Mrs Cad. Lord! what signifies carrying such a lumbering thing about?

Cad. Signifies! you are a fool, Beck. Why, suppose we should have any disputes when we are abroad about precedence, how the devil shall we be able to settle it? But you shall see it at home. Oh Becky, come hither; we will refer our dispute to—— [*They go apart.*

Ara. Well, sir, your friend has prevailed, and you are acquainted with my brother; but what use you propose—

Cape. The pleasure of a more frequent admission to you.

Ara. Is that all?

Cape. Who knows but a strict intimacy with Mr Cadwallader may in time incline him to favour my hopes?

Ara. A sandy foundation!—Could he be prevailed upon to forgive your want of fortune, the obscurity, or, at least, uncertainty, of your birth, will prove an unsurmountable bar.

Cad. Hold, hold, hold, Beck;—zounds! you are so———

Sprightt. Well, but hear him out, madam.

Cape. Consider, we have but an instant. What project? What advice?

Ara. O fie! You would be ashamed to receive succour from a weak woman!—Poetry is your profession, you know; so that plots, contrivances, and all the powers of imagination, are more peculiarly your province.

Cape. Is this a season to rally?

Cad. Hold, hold, hold! ask Mr Cape.

Ara. To be serious, then; if you have any point to gain with my brother, your application must be to his better part.

Cape. I understand you; plough with the heifer?

Ara. A delicate allusion, on my word! but take this hint—Amongst her passions, admiration, or rather adoration, is the principal.

Cape. Oh! that is her foible?

Ara. One of them; against that fort you must plant your batteries—But here they are.

Mrs Cad. I tell you, you are a nonsense man. and I won't agree to any such thing:—Why, what signifies a parliament man? You make such a rout, indeed.

Cad. Hold, Becky, my dear, don't be in a passion now, hold; let us reason the thing a little, my dear.

Mrs Cad. I tell you I wont—what, is the man an oaf? I wont reason;—I hate reason; and so there's an end on't.

Cad. Why, then, you are obstinate, ecod, perverse. Hey, but my dear, now! Becky, that's a good girl:—Hey! come, hold, hold—Egad, we'll refer it to Mr Cape.

Mrs Cad. Defer it to who you will, it will signify nothing.

Cape. Bless me! what's the matter, madam?—Sure, Mr Cadwallader, you must have been to blame; no inconsiderable matter could have ruffled the natural softness of that tender and delicate mind.

Ara. Pretty well commenced.

Mrs Cad. Why, he's always a fool, I think; he wants to send our little Dicky to school, and make him a parliament-man.

Cape. How old is master, madam?

Mrs Cad. Three years and a quarter, come Lady-day.

Cape. The intention is rather early.

Cad. Hey! early? hold, hold! but Becky mistakes the thing—Egad, I'll tell you the whole affair.

Mrs Cad. You had better hold your chattering, so you had.

Cad. Nay, prithee, my dear! Mr Sprightly, do stop her mouth; hold, hold. The matter, Mr Cape, is this. Have you ever seen my Dicky?

Cape. Never.

Cad. No! hold, hold; egad he's a fine, a sensible child; I tell Becky he's like her, to keep her in humour; but, between you and I, he has more sense already than all her family put together. Hey! Becky, is not Dicky the picture of you? He's a sweet child. Now, Mr Cape, you must know, I want to put little Dicky to school; now between—hey! you, hold, you, hold, the great use of a school is, hey! egad, for children to make acquaintances that may hereafter be useful to them: For, between you and I, as to what they learn there, it does not signify twopence.

Cape. Not a farthing.

Cad. Does it, hey?—Now, this is our dispute, whether poor little Dicky (he's a sweet boy) shall go to Mr Quæ-Genius's at Edgware, and make an acquaintance with my young lord Knap, the eldest son of the earl of Frize, or to Dr Tickle-pitcher's at Barnet, to form a friendship with young Stocks, the rich broker's only child.

Cape. And for which does the lady determine?

Cad. Why, I have told her the case—says I, Becky, my dear, who knows, if Dicky goes to Quæ's-Genius's, but my lord Knap may take such a fancy to him, that upon the death of his father, and he comes to be earl of Frize, he may make poor little Dicky a member of parliament? Hey, Cape?

Mrs Cad. Ay; but, then, if Dicky goes to Tickle-pitcher's, who can tell but young Stocks, when he comes to his fortune, may lend him money if he wants it?

Cad. And, if he does not want it, he won't take after his father, hey? Well, what's your opinion, Mr Cape?

Cape. Why, sir, I can't but join with the lady; money is the main article; it is that that makes the mare to go.

Cad. Hey! egad, and the alderman, too, you: so Dicky may be a member, and a fig for my lord: Well, Becky, be quiet; he shall stick to Stocks.

Mrs Cad. Ay, let'n; I was sure as how I was right.

Cad. Well, hush, Becky. Mr Cape, will you eat a bit with us to-day, hey! will you?

Cape. You command me.

Cad. That's kind: why, then, Becky and Bell shall step and order the cook to toss up a little nice——Hey! will you, Becky? Do, and I'll bring Cape.

Mrs Cad. Ay, with all my heart. Well, Mr What-d'ye-call-um, the poet; ecod the man's well enough—Your servant.

Cape. I am a little too much in dishabille to offer your ladyship my hand to your coach.

Cad. Psha! never mind, I'll do it——Here you have company coming.

[*Exeunt* MR *and* MRS CADWALLADER *and* ARABELLA.

Enter GOVERNOR *and* ROBIN.

Cape. Ah, Mr Robin!

Rob. Why, you have had a great levee this morning, sir.

Cape. Ay, Robin, there's no obscuring extraordinary talents.

Rob. True, sir; and this friend of mine begs to claim the benefit of them.

Cape. Any friend of yours: but how can I be serviceable to him?

Rob. Why, sir, he is lately returned from a profitable government; and, as you know the unsatisfied mind of man, no sooner is one object possessed, but another starts up to—

Cape. A truce to moralizing, dear Robin; to the matter; I am a little busy.

Rob. In a word, then, this gentleman, having a good deal of wealth, is desirous of a little honour.

Cape. How can I confer it?

Rob. Your pen may.

Cape. I don't understand you.

Rob. Why, touch him up a handsome complimentary address from his colony, by way of praising the prudence of his administration, his justice, valour, benevolence, and———

Cape. I am sorry 'tis impossible for me now to misunderstand you. The obligations I owe you, Robin, nothing can cancel; otherwise, this would prove our last interview.—Your friend, sir, has been a little mistaken, in recommending me as a person fit for your purpose. Letters have been always my passion, and, indeed, are now my profession; but, though I am the servant of the public, I am not the prostitute of particulars: As my pen has never been tinged with gall to gratify popular resentment, or private pique, so it shall never sacrifice its integrity to flatter pride, impose falsehood, or palliate guilt. Your merit may be great; but, let those, sir, be the heralds of your worth, who are better acquainted with it.

Gov. Young man, I like your principles and spirit; your manly refusal gives me more pleasure than any honours your papers could have procured me.

Spright. Now, this business is dispatched, let us return to our own affairs——You dine at Cadwallader's?

Cape. I do.

Spright. Would it not be convenient to you to have him out of the way.

Cape. Extremely.

Spright. I have a project that I think will prevail.

Cape. Of what kind?

Spright. Bordering upon the dramatic; but the time is so pressing, I shall be at a loss to procure performers. Let's see—Robin is a sure card—a principal may easily be met with; but where the deuce can I get an interpreter?

Rob. Offer yourself, sir; it will give you an opportunity of more closely inspecting the conduct of your son. [*Aside to* Gov.

Gov. True. Sir, though a scheme of this sort may ill suit with my character and time of life, yet, from a private interest I take in that gentleman's affairs, if the means are honourable—

Spright. Innocent, upon my credit.

Gov. Why, then, sir, I have no objection, if you think me equal to the task——

Spright. Most happily fitted for it. I should not have taken the liberty—But hush! he's returned.

Enter CADWALLADER.

Spright. My dear friend! the luckiest circumstance!

Cad. Hey! how? Stay, hey!

Spright. You see that gentleman?

Cad. Well, hey!

Spright. Do you know who he is?

Cad. Not I.

Spright. He is interpreter to prince Potowowsky.

Cad. Wowsky!—Who the devil is he?

Spright. Why, the Tartarian prince, that's come over ambassador from the Cham of the Calmucks.

Cad. Indeed!

Spright. His highness has just sent me an invitation to dine with him: now every body that dines with a Tartarian lord has a right to carry with him what the Latins called his *umbra*; in their language it is *jablanousky*.

Cad. Jablanousky! well.

Spright. Now, if you will go in that capacity, I shall be glad of the honour.

Cad. Hey! why, would you carry me to dine with his royal highness?

Spright. With pleasure.

Cad. My dear friend, I shall take it as the greatest favour, the greatest obligation——I shall never be able to return it.

Spright. Don't mention it.

Cad. Hey! but hold, hold, how the devil shall I get off with the poet! You know I have asked him to dinner.

Spright. Oh, the occasion will be apology sufficient; besides, there will be the ladies to receive him.

Cad. My dear Mr Cape, I beg ten thousand pardons! but here your friend is invited to dinner with prince ——— what the devil is his name?

Spright. Potowowsky.

Cad. True; now, sir, ecod he has been so kind as to offer to carry me as his jablanousky; would you be so good to excuse——

Cape. By all means; not a word, I beg.

Cad. That is exceeding kind; I'll come to you after dinner; hey! stay, but is there any ceremony to be used with his highness?

Spright. You dine upon carpets, cross-legged.

Cad. Hey! hold, hold! cross-legged! zounds! that's odd; well, well, you shall teach me.

Spright. And his highness is particularly plea-

sed with those amongst his guests that do honour to his country soup.

Cad. Oh! let me alone for that:—But should not I dress?

Spright. No; there's no occasion for it.

Cad. Dear friend, forgive me; nothing should take me from you, but being a hobblinwisky. Well, I'll go and study to sit cross-legged, till you call me.

Spright. Do so.

Cad. His highness Potowowsky! This is the luckiest accident! [*Exit* CAD.

Cape. Ha, ha, ha!—but how will you conduct your enterprize?

Spright. We'll carry him to your friend Robin's; dress up one of the under actors in a ridiculous habit; this gentleman shall talk a little gibberish with him. I'll compose a soup of some nauseous ingredients; let me alone to manage. But do you choose, sir, the part we have assigned you?

Gov. As it seems to be but a harmless piece of mirth, I have no objection.

Spright. Well, then, let us about it: come, sir.

Cape. Mr Sprightly?

Spright. What's the matter?

Cape. Would it not be right to be a little spruce, a little smart, upon this occasion?

Spright. No doubt; dress, dress, man; no time is to be lost.

Cape. Well, but, Jack, I cannot say that at present I——

Spright. Prithee explain. What would you say?

Cape. Why, then, I cannot say that I have any other garments at home.

Spright. Oh, I understand you; is that all? Here, here, take my———

Cape. Dear Sprightly, I am quite ashamed, and sorry.

Spright. That's not so obliging, George; what, sorry to give me the greatest pleasure that—But, I have no time for speeches, I must run to get ready my soup. Come, gentlemen.

Rob. Did you observe, sir?

Gov. Most feelingly! But it will soon be over.

Rob. Courage, sir; times, perhaps, may change.

Cape. A poor prospect, Robin! But this scheme of life at last must be changed: for what spirit, with the least spark of generosity, can support a life of eternal obligation and disagreeable drudgery? Inclination not consulted, genius cramped, and talents misapplied!

What prospect have those authors to be read,
Whose daily writings earn their daily bread!

ACT II.

SCENE I.

YOUNG CAPE *and* MRS CADWALLADER, *at cards.*

Mrs Cad. You want four, and I two, and my deal: now, knave noddy—no, hearts be trumps.

Cape. I beg.

Mrs Cad. Will you stock them?

Cape. Go on, if you please, madam.

Mrs Cad. Hearts again——one, two, three; one, two—hang them, they won't slip, three.—Diamonds—the two: have you higher than the queen?

Cape. No, madam.

Mrs Cad. Then there's highest—and lowest, by gosh! Games are even; you are to deal.

Cape. Pshaw, hang cards! there are other amusements better suited to a tête-à-tête, than any of the four aces can afford us.

Mrs Cad. What pastimes be they? We ben't enough for hunt the whistle, nor blind man's buff: but I'll call our Bell, and Robin the butler.—Dicky will be here by and by.

Cape. Hold a minute. I have a game to propose, where the presence of a third person, especially Mr Cadwallader's, would totally ruin the sport.

Mrs Cad. Ay! what can that be?

Cape. Can't you guess?

Mrs Cad. Not I; questions and commands, mayhap.

Cape. Not absolutely that—some little resemblance; for I am to request, and you are to command.

Mrs Cad. Oh, daisy! that's charming; I never played at that in all my born days; come, begin then.

Cape. Can you love me?

Mrs Cad. Love you! But is it in jest or earnest?

Cape. That is as you please to determine.

Mrs Cad. But mayn't I ask you questions, too?

Cape. Doubtless.

Mrs Cad. Why, then, do you love me?

Cape. With all my soul!

Mrs Cad. Upon your sayso?

Cape. Upon my sayso.

Mrs Cad. I'm glad on't, with all my heart.—This is the rarest pastime!———

Cape. But you have not answered my question.

Mrs Cad. Hey? that's true. Why, I believe there's no love lost.

Cape. So; our game will soon be over; I shall be up at a deal. I wish I mayn't be engaged to play deeper here than I intended, though. [*Aside.*

Mrs Cad. Well; now 'tis your turn.

Cape. True, ay; but, zooks, you are too hasty! the pleasure of this play, like hunting, does not consist in immediately chopping the prey.

Mrs Cad. No! how then?

Cape. Why, first, I am to start you; then run you a little in view: then lose you; then unravel all the tricks and doubles you make to escape me.

You fly o'er hedge and stile,
I pursue for many a mile:
You grow tired at last, and quat;
Then I catch you, and all that.

Mrs Cad. Dear me, there's a deal on't! I shall never be able to hold out long; I had rather be taken in view.

Cape. I believe you.

Mrs Cad. Well, come, begin and start me, that I may come the sooner to quatting—hush! here's sister; what the deuce brought her? Bell will be for learning this game, too; but don't you coach her, for your life, Mr Poet!

Enter ARABELLA.

Ara. Your mantua-maker, with your new sack, sister.

Mrs Cad. Is that all? She might have staid, I think.

Ara. What? You were better engaged? But don't be angry; I am sorry I interrupted you.

Mrs Cad. Hey! Now will I be hanged if she ben't jealous of Mr Poet; but I'll listen, and see the end on't, I am resolved.

[*Aside, and exit.*

Ara. Are you concerned at the interruption, too?

Cape. It was a very seasonable one, I promise you: had you staid a little longer, I don't know what might have been the consequence.

Ara. No danger to your person, I hope?

Cape. Some little attacks upon it.

Ara. Which were as feebly resisted.

Cape. Why, consider, my dear Bell, though your sister is a fool, she is a fine woman, and flesh is frail.

Ara. Dear Bell! and flesh is frail! we are grown strangely familiar, I think.

Cape. Hey-day? In what corner sits the wind, now?

Ara. Where it may possibly blow strong enough to overset your hopes.

Cape. That a breeze of your breath can do.

Ara. Affected!

Cape. You are obliging, madam; but, pray, what is the meaning of all this?

Ara. Ask your own guilty conscience.

Cape. Were I inclined to flatter myself, this little passion would be no bad presage.

Ara. You may prove a false prophet.

Cape. Let me die if I know what to—but to descend to a little common sense; what part of my conduct—

Ara. Look'e, Mr Cape, all explanations are unnecessary: I have been lucky enough to discover your disposition before it is too late; and so you know there's no occasion—but, however, I'll not be any impediment to you: my sister will be back immediately; I suppose my presence will only——but consider, sir, I have a brother's honour———

Cape. Which is as safe from me, as if it was locked up in your brother's closet; but surely, madam, you are a little capricious here; have I done any thing but obey your directions?

Ara. That was founded upon a supposition, that———but no matter.

Cape. That, what?

Ara. Why, I was weak enough to believe, what you was wicked enough to protest—

Cape. That I loved you? and what reason have I given you to doubt it?

Ara. A pretty situation I found you in at my entrance.

Cape. An assumed warmth, for the better concealing the fraud.

Mrs Cad. What's that? [*Aside, listening.*

Cape. Surely, if you doubted my constancy, you must have a better opinion of my understanding.

Mrs Cad. Mighty well! [*Aside.*

Cape. What an idiot, a driveller! no consideration upon earth, but my paving the way to the possession of you, could have prevailed upon me to support her folly a minute.

Enter MRS CADWALLADER.

Mrs Cad. Soh! Mr Poet, you are a pretty gentleman, indeed; ecod, I'm glad I have caught you. I'm not such a fool as you think for, man; but here will be Dicky presently; he shall hear of your tricks, he shall: I'll let him know what a pretty person he has got in his house.

Cape. There's no parrying this; had not I better decamp?

Ara. And leave me to the mercy of the enemy? My brother's temper is so odd, there's no knowing in what light he'll see this.

Mrs Cad. Oh, he's below; I hear him. Now we shall hear what he'll say to you, madam.

Enter CADWALLADER, GOVERNOR, SPRIGHTLY, *and* ROBIN.

Cad. No, pray walk in, Mr Interpreter; between you and I, I like his royal highness mightily; he's a polite, pretty, well-bred gentleman—but damn his soup!

Gov. Why, sir, you eat as if you liked it.

Cad. Liked it! hey, egad, I would not eat another mess to be his master's prime minister;

as bitter as gall, and as black as my hat; and there have I been sitting these two hours with my legs under me, till they are both as dead as a herring.

Cape. Your dinner displeased you?

Cad. Displeased! hey! look'e, Mr Sprightly, I'm mightily obliged to you for the honour; but hold, hold! you shall never persuade me to be a hobblinwisky again, if the great cham of the Calmucs were to come over himself. Hey! and what a damned language he has got! Whee, haw, haw—but you speak it very fluently.

Gov I was long resident in the country.

Cad. May be so, but he seems to speak it better; you have a foreign kind of an accent: you don't sound it through the nose so well as he.—Hey! well, Becky, what, and how have you entertained Mr Cape?

Mrs Cad. Oh! here have been fine doings since you have been gone!

Cape. So; now comes on the storm.

Cad. Hey! hold, hold! what has been the matter?

Mrs Cad. Matter! why, the devil is in the poet, I think!

Cad. The devil! hold.

Mrs Cad. Why, here he has been making love to me like bewitched.

Cad. How! which way?

Mrs Cad. Why, some on't was out of his poetry, I think.

Cad. Hey! hold, hold! egad, I believe he's a little mad: this morning he took me for king Turnus, you; now, who can tell but this afternoon he may take you for queen Dido?

Mrs Cad. And there he told me I was to run, and to double and quat, and there he was to catch me, and all that.

Cad. Hold, hold! Catch you? Mr Cape, I take it very unkindly; it was, d'ye see, a very unfriendly thing to make love to Becky in my absence.

Cape. But, sir——

Cad. And it was the more ungenerous, Mr Cape, to take this advantage, as you know she is but a foolish woman.

Mrs Cad. Ay, me, who am but a foolish woman.

Cape. But hear me!

Cad. A poor, ignorant, illiterate, poor Becky! And for a man of your parts to attack———

Cape. There's no———

Cad. Hold, hold! ecod, it is just as if the Grand Signior, at the head of his janissaries, was to kick a chimney-sweeper.

Mrs Cad. Hey! what's that you say, Dicky? what, be I like a chimney-sweeper?

Cad. Hey! hold, hold! Zounds! no, Beck! hey! no; that's only by way of simile, to let him see I understand his tropes and figures as well as himself, egad! and therefore————

Spright. Nay; but, Mr Cadwallader—

Cad. Don't mention it, Mr Sprightly; he's the first poet I every had in my house, except the bellman for a Christmas-box.

Spright. Good sir!

Cad. And—hold, hold! I am resolved he shall be the last.

Spright. I have but one way to silence him.

Cad. And let me tell you—

Spright. Nay, sir, I must tell him; he owes his reception, here, to my recommendation; any abuse of your goodness, any breach of hospitality, here, he is answerable to me for.

Cad. Hey! hold, hold; so he is, ecod: at him; give it him home.

Spright. Ungrateful monster! And is this your return, for the open, generous treatment——

Mrs Cad. As good fried cow-heel, with a roast fowl and sausages, as ever came to a table.

Cad. Hush, Beck, hush!

Spright. And could you find no other object but Mr Cadwallader; a man, perhaps, possessed of a genius superior to your own——

Cad. If I had had a university education—

Spright. And of a family as old as the creation!

Cad. Older; Beck, fetch the pedigree.

Spright. Thus far relates to this gentleman; but now, sir, what apology can you make me, who was your passport, your security?

Cad. Zounds, none! fight him!

Spright. Fight him!

Cad. Ay, do; I'd fight him myself, if I had not had the measles last winter; but stay till I get out of the room.

Spright. No: he's sure of a protection here, the presence of the ladies.

Cad. Psha, pox! they belong to the family; never mind them.

Spright. Well, sir, are you dumb? No excuse? No palliation?

Cad. Ay; no palliation?

Mrs Cad. Ay; no tribulation? 'Tis a shame, so it is.

Cape. When I have leave to speak—

Cad. Speak! what the devil can you say?

Cape. Nay, sir——

Spright. Let's hear him, Mr Cadwallader, however.

Cad. Hold, hold! come, begin, then.

Cape. And first to you, Mr Sprightly, as you you seem most interested; pray, does this charge correspond with any other action of my life, since I have had the honour to know you?

Spright. Indeed, I can't say that I recollect; but still as the scholiasts——*Nemo repente turpissimus.*

Cad. Hold, hold; what's that?

Spright. Why, that is as much as to say, this is bad enough.

Mrs Cad. By gosh! and so it is.

Cad. Ecod, and so it is: speak a little more Latin to him; if I had been bred at the univer-

sity, you should have it both sides of your ears.

Cape. A little patience, gentlemen: now, sir, to you. You were pleased yourself to drop a few hints of your lady's weakness; might not she take too seriously what was meant as a mere matter of merriment?

Cad. Hey! hold, hold!

Spright. A paltry excuse; can any woman be such a fool as not to know when a man has a design upon her person?

Cad. Answer that, Mr Cape, hey! Answer that.

Cape. I can only answer for the innocency of my own intentions; may not your lady, apprehensive of my becoming too great a favourite, contrive this charge with a view of destroying the connection———

Spright. Connection!

Cad. Hey! hold, hold! connection?

Spright. There's something in that—

Cad. Hey! is there?—hold, hold, hey! egad, he is right—you're right, Mr Cape; hold, Becky, my dear, how the devil could you be so wicked, hey! child; ecod, hold, hold! how could you have the wickedness to attempt to destroy the connection!

Mrs Cad. I don't know what you say.

Cad. D'ye hear? You are an incendiary, but you have missed your point; the connection shall be only the stronger: My dear friend, I beg ten thousand pardons, I was too hasty; but, ecod, Becky's to blame.

Cape. The return of your favour has effaced every other impression.

Cad. There's a good-natured creature!

Cape. But if you have the least doubts remaining, this lady, your sister, I believe, will do me the justice to own—

Mrs Cad. Ay, ask my fellow if I be a thief!

Cad. What the devil is Becky at now?

Mrs Cad. She's as bad as he.

Cad. Bad as he!—Hey! how! what the devil! she did not make love to you too? Stop, hey! hold, hold, hold!

Mrs Cad. Why no, foolish—but you are always running on with your riggmonrowles, and won't stay to hear a body's story out.

Cad. Well, Beck! come, let's have it.

Mrs Cad. Be quiet then; why, as I was telling you, first he made love to me, and wanted me to be a hare!

Cad. A hare! hold, ecod, that was whimsical! a hare! hey! oh, ecod, that might be because he thought you a little hair-brained already, Becky! a damned good story; Well, Becky, go on, let's have it out.

Mrs Cad. No, I won't tell you no more, so I won't.

Cad. Nay, prythee, Beck!

Mrs Cad. Hold your tongue then:—and so there he was going on with his nonsense; and so in came our Bell; and so—

Cad. Hold, hold, Becky,—damn your so's; go on, child, but leave out your so's; 'tis a low—— hold, hold, vulgar—but go on.

Mrs Cad. Why, how can I go on, when you stop me every minute? Well, and then our Bell came in, and interrupted him; and methought she looked very frumpish and jealous.

Cad. Well.

Mrs Cad. And so I went out and listened.

Cad. So; what, you staid and listened?

Mrs Cad. No; I tell you, upon my staying, she went out; no—upon my going out, she staid.

Cad. This is a damned blind story; but go on, Beck.

Mrs Cad. And then at first she scolded him roundly for making love to me; and then he said, as how she advised him to it: and then she said no; and then he said—

Cad. Hold, hold; we shall never understand all these he's and she's; this may all be very true, Beck, but hold, hold; as I hope to be saved, thou art the worst teller of a story—

Mrs Cad. Well, I have but a word more; and then he said, as how I was a great fool.

Cad. Not much mistaken in that. [*Aside.*

Mrs Cad. And that he would not have staid with me a minute, but to pave the way to the possession of she.

Cad. Well, Beck, well?

Mrs Cad. And so——that's all.

Cad. Make love to her, in order to get possession of you?

Mrs Cad. Love to me, in order to get she.

Cad. Hey! Oh, now, I begin to understand. Hey! What! is this true, Bell, Hey! Hold, hold, hold; ecod, I begin to smoke, hey! Mr Cape?

Cape. How shall I act?

Rob. Own it, sir; I have a reason.

Cad. Well, what say you, Mr Cape? Let's have it without equivocation; or, hold, hold, hold, mental reservation! Guilty, or not?

Cape. Of what, sir?

Cad. Of what! Hold, hold! of making love to Bell?

Cape. Guilty.

Cad. Hey! how! Hold, zounds! No, what, not with an intention to marry her?

Cape. With the lady's approbation, and your kind consent.

Cad. Hold, hold! what, my consent to marry you?

Cape. Ay, sir.

Cad. Hold, hold, hold! what, our Bell to mix the blood of the Cadwalladers with the puddle of a poet?

Cape. Sir!

Cad. A petty, paltry, ragged, rhiming—

Spright. But Mr——

Cad. A scribbling—hold, hold, hold—garretteer, that has no more cloaths than backs, no more heads than hats, and no shoes to his feet.

Spright. Nay, but——

Cad. The offspring of a dunghill! born in a cellar—Hold, hold—and living in a garret! a fungus, a mushroom!

Cape. Sir, my family—

Cad. Your family! Hold, hold, hold—Peter, fetch the pedigree; I'll show you—Your family! a little obscure—hold, hold, I don't believe you ever had a grandfather—

Enter PETER *with the pedigree.*

There it is! there; Peter, help me to stretch it out: there's seven yards more of lineals, besides three of collaterals, that I expect next Monday from the herald's office: d'ye see, Mr Sprightly?

Spright. Prodigious!

Cad. Nay; but look'e, there's Welsh princes and ambassadors, and kings of Scotland, and members of parliament: hold, hold! ecod, I no more mind an earl or a lord in my pedigree, hold, hold, than Kuli Khan would a serjeant in the trained bands.

Spright. An amazing descent!

Cad. Hey! is it not? And for this low, lousy, son of a shoemaker, to talk of families—hold, hold, get out of my house!

Rob. Now is your time, sir.

Cad. Mr Sprightly, turn him out.

Gov. Stop, sir; I have a secret to disclose, that may make you alter your intentions.

Cad. Hold, hold! how, Mr Interpreter?

Gov. You are now to regard that young man in a very different light, and consider him as my son.

Cape. Your son, sir!

Gov. In a moment, George, the mystery shall be explained.

Cad. Your son! Hold, hold! and what then?

Gov. Then! Why then he is no longer the scribbler, the mushroom you have described; but of birth and fortune equal to your own.

Cad. What! the son of an interpreter equal to me! A fellow that trudges about, teaching of languages to foreign courts!

Gov. A teacher of languages!

Cad. Stay; ecod, a runner to Monsieurs and Marquisses!

Spright. You are mistaken, sir.

Cad. A jack-pudding! that takes fillips on the nose for sixpence a-piece! Hold, hold! ecod, give me eighteen-pennyworth, and change for half-a-crown.

Gov. Stop when you are well.

Cad. A spunger at other mens' tables! that has jallap put into his beer, and his face blacked at Christmas for the diversion of children!

Gov. I can hold no longer. 'Sdeath, sir, who is it you dare treat in this manner?

Cad. Hey! Zounds, Mr Sprightly, lay hold of him.

Spright. Calm your choler. Indeed, Mr Cadwallader, nothing could excuse your behaviour to this gentleman, but your mistaking his person.

Cad. Hold, hold! Is not he interpreter to—

Spright. No.

Cad. Why did not you tell——

Spright. That was a mistake. This gentleman is the prince's friend; and, by long residence in the monarch's country, is perfect master of the language.

Cad. But who the devil is he, then?

Spright. He is Mr Cape, sir; a man of unblemished honour, capital fortune, and late governor of one of our most considerable settlements.

Cad. Governor! Hold, hold! and how came you father to———hey!—

Gov. By marrying his mother.

Cape. But how am I to regard this?

Gov. As a solemn truth; that foreign friend, to whom you owe your education, was no other than myself: I had my reasons, perhaps capricious ones, for concealing this; but now they cease, and I am proud to own my son.

Cape. Sir! it is not for me [*Kneeling.*], but if gratitude, duty, filial———

Gov. Rise, my boy. I have ventured far to fix thy fortune, George; but, to find thee worthy of it, more than o'erpays my toil; the rest of my story shall be reserved till we are alone.

Cad. Hey! Hold, hold, hold! ecod, a good sensible old fellow this; but hark'e, Sprightly, I have made a damned blunder here. Hold, hold! Mr Governor, I ask ten thousand pardons; but who the devil could have thought that the interpreter to prince Potuwowsky———

Gov. Oh, sir, you have in your power sufficient means to atone for the injuries done us both.

Cad. Hold, how?

Gov. By bestowing your sister with, I flatter myself, no great violence to her inclinations, here.

Cad. What, marry Bell! Hey! Hold, hold, hold! zounds, Bell, take him, do; 'ecod, he's a good likely———hey! Will you?

Arab. I shan't disobey you, sir.

Cad. Shan't you? That's right. Who the devil knews, but he may come to be a governor himself; hey! Hold, hold; come here, then, give me your hands both. [*Joins their hands.*] There, there; the business is done. And now, brother governor—

Gov. And now, brother Cadwallader.

Cad. Hey! Beck, here's something now for my pedigree; we'll pop in the Governor to-morrow.

Mrs Cad. Hark'e, Mr Governor, can you give me a black boy and a monkey?

Cad. Hey! ay, ay, you shall have a black boy, and a monkey, and a parrot too, Beck.

Spright. Dear George, I am a little late in my congratulation; but———

Gov. Which, if he is, in acknowledging your disinterested friendship, I shall be sorry I ever owned him. Now, Robin, my cares are over, and my wishes full; and if George remains as untainted by affluence as he has been untempted by distress, I have given the poor a protector, his country an advocate, and the world a friend.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

MALE-COQUETTE.

BY

GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

DAFFODIL, *the Male-coquette.*
TUKELY, *attached to* SOPHIA.
LORD RACKET, SIR WILLIAM WHISTER, SIR TAN-TIVY, SPINNER, DIZZY, *men of the town.*
RUFFLE, *valet to* DAFFODIL.
First Waiter.
Second Waiter.
Harry.

WOMEN.

SOPHIA, *involuntarily partial to* DAFFODIL, *but esteeming* TUKELY.
ARABELLA, MRS DOTTEREL, WIDOW DAMPLY, LADY FANNY PEWIT, *attached to* DAFFODIL.

Scene—London.

ACT. I.

SCENE—I.

Enter ARABELLA, *and* SOPHIA *in Men's clothes.*

Ara. INDEED, my dear, you'll repent this frolic.

Sop. Indeed, my dear, then it will be the first frolic I ever repented in all my life. Look'e, Bell, 'tis in vain to oppose me, for I am resolved —the only way to find out his character, is to see him thus, and converse freely with him. If he is the wretch he is reported to be, I shall away with him at once; and if he is not, he will thank me for the trial, and our union will be the stronger.

Ara. I never knew a woman yet, who had prudence enough to turn off a pretty fellow, because he had a little more wickedness than the rest of his neighbours.

Sop. Then I will be the first to set a better example.—If I did not think a man's character was of some consequence, I should not now run such risques, and encounter such difficulties, to be better acquainted with it.

Ara. Ha, Sophy! if you have love enough to be jealous, and jealousy enough to try these experiments———don't imagine, though you should make terrible discoveries, that you can immediately quit your inclinations, with your breeches; and return so very philosophically to your petticoats again, ha, ha!———

Sop. You may be as merry with my weakne-

ses, as you please, madam; but I know my own heart, and can rely upon it.

Ara. We are great bullies by nature; but courage and swaggering are two things, cousin.

Sop. Since you are as little to be convinced, as I am to be persuaded——your servant——

[*Going.*

Ara. Nay, Sophy, this is unfriendly—if you are resolved upon your scheme, open to me without reserve, and I'll assist you.

Sop. Imprimis, then; I confess to you, that I have a kind of whimsical attachment to Daffodil; not but I can see his vanities and laugh at them.

Ara. And like him better for them——

Sop. Pshaw! don't plague me, Bell—my other lover, the jealous Mr Tukely——

Ara. Who loves you too well to be successful——

Sop. And whom I really esteem——

Ara. As a good sort of man, ha, ha, ha!

Sop. Nay, should have loved him——

Ara. Had not a prettier fellow stept in between, who perhaps does not care a farthing for you——

Sop. That's the question, my dear—Tukely, I say, either stung by jealousy, or unwilling to lose me, without a struggle, has intreated me to know more of his rival, before I engage too far with him—Many strange things he has told me, which have piqued me, I must confess, and I am now prepared for the proof.

Ara. You'll certainly be discovered, and put to shame.

Sop. I have secured my success already.

Ara. What do you mean?

Sop. I have seen him, conversed with him, and am to meet him again to-day, by his own appointment.

Ara. Madness! it can't be.

Sop. But it has been, I tell you——

Ara. How? how? Quickly, quickly, dear Sophy?

Sop. When you went to lady Fanny's last night, and left me, as you thought, little disposed for a frolic, I dressed me as you see, called a chair, and went to the King's Arms, asked for my gentleman, and was shewn into a room; he immediately left his company, and came to me.

Ara. I tremble for you.

Sop. I introduced myself as an Italian nobleman, just arrived: *Il Marchese di Macaroni*—

Ara. Ridiculous! ha, ha!

Sop. An intimate of sir Charles Vainlove's, who is now at Rome—I told him my letters were with my baggage, at the custom-house—He received me with all the openness imaginable, and would have introduced me to his friends. I begged to be excused, but promised to attend him to-day, and am now ready, as you see, to keep my word.

Ara. Astonishing!—and what did you talk about?

Sop. Of various things——women among the rest; and though I have not absolutely any open acts of rebellion against him, yet I fear he is a traitor at heart—and then such vanity!—but I had not time to make great discoveries——it was merely the prologue—The play is to come.

Ara. Act your part well, or we shall hiss you.

Sop. Never fear me; you don't know what a mad, raking, wild young devil I can be, if I set my mind to it, Bell. [*Laying hold of her.*

Ara. You fright me!—you shall positively be no bed-fellow of mine any longer.

Sop. I am resolved to ruin my woman, and kill my man, before I get into petticoats again.

Ara. Take care of a quarrel though—a rival may be too rough with you.

Sop. No, no, fighting is not the vice of these times; and, as for a little swaggering, damn it, I can do it as well as the best of them.

Ara. Hush, hush! Mr Tukely is here——

Sop. Now for a trial of skill; if I deceive him, you'll allow that half of my business is done.

[*She walks aside, takes out a glass, and looks at the pictures.*

Enter TUKELY.

Tuke. Your servant, Miss Bell—I need not ask if Miss Sophy be at home, for I believe I have seen her since you did.

Ara. Have you, sir? You seem disconcerted, Mr Tukely: Has any thing happened?

Tuke. A trifle, madam—but I was born to be trifled with, and to be made uneasy at trifles.

Ara. Pray, what trifling affair has disturbed you thus?

Sop. What's the matter now? [*Aside.*

Tuke. I met Miss Sophy this moment in a hackney chair, at the end of the street: I knew her by the pink negligee; but, upon my crossing the way to speak to her, she turned her head away, laughed violently, and drew the curtain in my face.

Sop. So, so; well said, jealousy. [*Aside.*

Ara. She was in haste, I suppose, to get to her engagement?

Tuke. Yes, yes, madam; I imagine she had some engagement upon her hands——But sure, madam, her great desire to see her more agreeable friends, need not be attended with contempt and disregard to the rest of her acquaintance.

Ara. Indeed, Mr Tukely, I have so many caprices, and follies of my own, that I can't possibly answer for my cousin's too.

Sop. Well said, Bell! [*Aside.*

Tuke. Answer, miss! No, Heaven forbid you should!—for my part, I have given up all my hopes as a lover, and only, now, feel for her as a

friend—and indeed as a friend, a sincere friend, I can't but say, that going out in a hackney chair, without a servant, and endeavouring to conceal herself, is somewhat incompatible with Miss Sophy's rank and reputation. This I speak as a friend, not as a lover, Miss Bell! pray mind that.

Ara. I see it very plainly, Mr Tukely, and it gives me great pleasure, that you can be so indifferent in your love, and yet so jealous in your friendship.

Tuke. You do me honour, miss, by your good opinion. [*Walks about, and sees* SOPHY.]—Who's that, pray?

Ara. A gentleman who is waiting for Sophy.

Tuke. I think she has gentlemen waiting for her every where.

Sop. I am afraid, sir, [*Coming up to him with her glass.*] you'll excuse me, that notwithstanding your declaration, and this lady's compliments, there is a little of the devil, called jealousy, at the bottom of all this uneasiness.

Tuke. Sir!

Sop. I say, sir, wear your cloak as long as you please, the hoof will peep out, take my word for it.

Tuke. Upon my word, sir, you are pleased to honour me with a familiarity which I neither expected, or indeed desired, upon so slight an acquaintance.

Sop. I dare swear you did not.

[*Turns off, and hums a tune.*

Tuke. I don't understand this!

Ara. This is beyond expectation. [*Aside.*

Sop. I presume, sir, you never was out of England? [*Picking her teeth.*

Tuke. I presume, sir, that you are mistaken—I never was so foolishly fond of my own country, to think that nothing good was to be had out of it; nor so shamefully ungrateful to it, to prefer the vices and fopperies of every other nation, to the peculiar advantages of my own.

Sop. Ha, ha! well said, old England, i'faith!—Now, madam, if this gentleman would put this speech into a farce, and properly lard it with roast beef, and liberty, I would engage the galleries would roar and halloo at it for half an hour together, ha, ha, ha!

Ara. Now the storm's coming. [*Aside.*

Tuke. If you are not engaged, sir, we'll adjourn to the next tavern, and write this farce between us.

Sop. I fancy, sir, by the information of your face, that you are more inclined to tragedy, than comedy——

Tuke. I shall be inclined to treat you very ill, if you don't walk out with me.

Sop. I have been treated so very ill already, in the little conversation I have had with you, that you must excuse my walking out for more of it; but if you'll persuade the lady to leave the room, I'll put you to death—damme——

[*Going up to him.*

Ara. For Heaven's sake! what's the matter, gentlemen?

Tuke. What can I do with this fellow?

Sop. Madam, don't be alarmed; this affair will be very short; I am always expeditious; and will cut his throat, without shocking you in the least:—Come, sir, [*Draws.*] if you won't defend yourself, I must kick you about the room.

[*Advancing.*

Tuke. Respect for this lady, and this house, has curbed my resentment hitherto: But as your insolence would take advantage of my forbearance, I must correct it at all events——

[*Draws.*

Sop. & Ara. Ha, ha, ha!

Tuke. What is all this?

Sop. What, would you set your courage to a poor weak woman? You are a bold Briton, indeed! Ha, ha, ha!

Tuke. What, Sophia?

Ara. Sophia! No, no; she is in a hackney-chair, you know, without a servant, in her pink negligee—Ha, ha, ha!

Tuke. I am astonished! and can scarce believe my own eyes—What means this metamorphosis?

Sop. 'Tis in obedience to your commands——Thus equipped, I have got access to Daffodil, and shall know whether your picture of him is drawn by your regard for me, or resentment to him—'I will sound him, from his lowest note to the top of his compass.'

Tuke. Your spirit transports me—This will be a busy, and, I hope, a happy day for me. I have appointed no less than five ladies to meet me at the widow Damply's; to each of whom, as well as yourself, the accomplished Mr Daffodil has presented his heart; the value of which I am resolved to convince them of this night, for the sake of the whole sex.

Sop. Pooh, pooh! that's the old story—You are so prejudiced—

Tuke. I am afraid 'tis you who are prejudiced, madam; for, if you will believe your own eyes and ears—

Sop. That I will, I assure you; I shall visit him immediately. He thinks me in the country; and, to confirm it, I'll write to him as from thence. But ask me no more questions about what I have done, and what is to be done; for I have not a moment to lose; and so, my good friend Tukely, yours——My dear Bell, I kiss your hand. [*Kisses her hand.*] You are a fine woman, by Heavens! Here, Joseppi, Brunello, Francesi, where are my fellows there? Call me a chair. *Viva l' Amor, et liberta*——

[*Exit, singing.*

Ara. Ha, ha! there is a spirit for you! Well, now, what do you stare at? You could not well desire more——O, fie, fie! don't sigh and bite your fingers; rouse yourself, man; set all your wits to work; bring this faithless Corydon to

shame, and I'll be hanged if the prize is not yours. If she returns in time, I'll bring her to the widow Damply's——

Tuke. Dear Miss Arabella————

Ara. Well, well; make me a fine speech another time. About your business now————

Tuke. I fly——— [*Exit.*

Ara. What a couple of blind fools has love made of this poor fellow, and my dear cousin Sophy! Little do they imagine, with all their wise discoveries, that Daffodil is as faithful a lover, as he is an accomplished gentleman. I pity these poor deceived women, with all my heart! But how will they stare, when they find that he has artfully pretended a regard for them, the better to conceal his real passion for me! They will certainly tear my eyes out; and what will cousin Sophy say to me, when we are obliged to declare our passion? No matter what—'Tis the fortune of war; and I shall only serve her, as she and every other friend would serve me in the same situation——

A little cheating never is a sin,
At love or cards—provided that you win.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—DAFFODILL's *lodgings.*

Enter DAFFODILL *and* RUFFLE.

Daf. But are you sure, Ruffle, that you delivered the letter last night, in the manner I ordered you?

Ruf. Exactly, sir.

Daf. And you are sure that Mr Dotterel saw you slip the note into his wife's hand?

Ruf. I have alarmed him, and you may be assured, that he is as uneasy as you would wish to have him. But I should be glad, with your honour's leave, to have a little serious conversation with you; for my mind forebodes much peril to the bones of your humble servant, and very little satisfaction to your honour.

Daf. Thou art a most incomprehensible blockhead————

Ruf. No great scholar or wit, indeed; but I can feel an oak sapling, as well as another; ay, and I should have felt one last night, if I had not had the heels of all Mr Dotterel's family—I had the whole pack after me——

Daf. And did not they catch you?

Ruf. No, thank Heaven————

Daf. You was not kicked, then?

Ruf. No, sir.

Daf. Nor caned?

Ruf. No, sir.

Daf. Nor dragged through a horse-pond?

Ruf. O, lord! No, sir.

Daf. That's unlucky————

Ruf. Sir!

Daf. You must go again, Ruffle, to-night; perhaps you may be in better luck.

Ruf. If I go again, sir, may I be caned, kicked, and horse-ponded for my pains. I believe I have been lucky enough to bring an old house over your head.

Daf. What do you mean?

Ruf. Mr Dotterel only hobbled after me, to pay me for the postage of your letter; but being a little out of wind, he soon stopt to curse and swear at me. I could hear him mutter something of scoundrel, and pimp, and my master, and villain—and blunderbuss and saw pit; and then he shook his stick, and looked like the devil!

Daf. Blunderbuss, and saw-pit! This business grows a little serious, and so we'll drop it.—The husband is so old and peevish, and she so young and pressing, that I'll give it up, Ruffle;—the town talks of us, and I am satisfied.

Ruf. Pray, sir, with submission, for what end do you write to so many ladies, and make such a rout about them? there are now upon the list half a dozen maids, a leash of wives, and the widow Damply. I know your honour don't intend mischief; but what pleasure can you have in deceiving them, and the world? for you are thought a terrible young gentleman.

Daf. Why that pleasure, booby!

Ruf. I don't understand it—What do you intend to do with them all? Ruin them?

Daf. Not I, faith.

Ruf. But you'll ruin their reputations?

Daf. That's their business; not mine.

Ruf. Will you marry any one of them?

Daf. O, no! that would be finishing the game at once. If I preferred one, the rest would take it ill; so, because I won't be particular, I give them all hopes, without going a step further.

Ruf. Widows can't live upon such slender diet.

Daf. A true sportsman has no pleasure but in the chase; the game is always given to those who have less taste, and better stomachs.

Ruf. I love to pick a bit, I must confess—Really, sir, I should not care what became of half the women you are pleased to be merry with—but, Miss Sophy, sure, is a heavenly creature, and deserves better treatment; and to make love to her cousin, too, in the same house! that is very cruel.

Daf. But it amuses one—besides they are both fine creatures. And how do I know, if I loved only one, but the other might poison herself?

Ruf. And when they know that you have loved them both, they may poison one another.—This affair will make a great noise.

Daf. Or I have taken a great deal of pains for nothing. But no more prating, sirrah; while I read my letters, go and ask Harry what cards and messages he has taken in this morning.

Ruf. There's no mending him!

[*Exit* RUFFLE.

Daf. [*Opens letters.*] This is from the widow Damply. I know her scrawl at a mile's distance—she pretends that the fright of her husband's death hurt her nerves so, that her hand has shook ever since—ha, ha, ha! It has hurt her spelling too, for here is joy with a G; ha, ha! poor creature! [*Reads.*] Hum—hum—hum. Well said, widow; she speaks plain, faith, and grows urgent. I must get quit of her—she desires a *tête a tête*; which, with widows, who have suffered much for the loss of their husband, is, as captain Bobadil says, a service of danger.—So, I am off. [*Opens another.*] What the devil have we here? A bill in chancery: Oh, no! my taylor's bill—Sum Total, three hundred and seventy-four pounds, eleven shillings, and five pence, three farthings. Indeed, Monsieur Chicaneau, this is a damned bill, and you will be damned for making it; therefore, for the good of your soul, Mons. Chicaneau, you must make another. [*Tears it.*] The French know their consequence, and use us accordingly. [*Opens another.*] This is from Newmarket.

[*Reads.*

'May it please your honour,

'I would not have you think of matching 'Cherry-Derry with Gingerbread; he is a terri- 'rible horse, and very covetous of his ground.— 'I have chopt Hurlothrumbo for the Roan mare, 'and fifty pounds. Sir Roger has taken the 'match off your hands, which is a good thing; 'for the mare has the distemper, and must have 'forfeited. I flung his honour's groom, though 'he was above an hour in the stable. The nut- 'meg grey, Custard, is matched with Alderman. 'Alderman has a long wind, and will be too 'hard for Custard.

'I am, your honour's
'Most obedient servant,
'ROGER WHIP.'

Whip is a genius, and a good servant. I have not as yet lost above a thousand pounds by my horses; but such luck can't always last.

Enter RUFFLE, *with cards.*

Ruf. There's the morning's cargo, sir.

[*Throws them down upon the table.*

Daf. Hey-day! I can't read them in a month; prithee, Ruffle, set down my invitations from the cards, according to their date, and let me see them to-morrow morning——So much reading would distract me.

Ruf. And yet these are the only books that gentlemen read now-a-days.

[*Aside.*

Enter a Servant.

Ser. An' please your honour, I forgot to tell you that there was a gentleman here last night. I've forgot his name.

Ruf. Old Mr Dotterel, perhaps?

Ser. Old! no, no, he looks younger than his honour. I believe he's mad, he can't stand still a moment; he first capered out of the chair, and when I told him your honour was not at home, he capered into it again—said he would call again, jabbered something, and away he went, singing.

Daf. 'Tis the marquis of Maccaroni; I saw him at the King's Arms yesterday: Admit him when he comes, Harry.

Ser. I shall, your honour—I can neither write or remember these outlandish names.

[*Exit Servant.*

Daf. Where is my list of women, Ruffle, and the places of their abode, that we may strike off some, and add the new acquisitions?

Ruf. What, alter again! I wrote it out fair but this morning—There are quicker successions in your honour's list, than the court-calendar.

Daf. Strike off Mrs Dotterell, and the widow Damply.

Ruf. They are undone.

[*Strikes them out.*

Enter Servant.

Ser. A lady, Mr Ruffle, in a chair, must speak with you.

Daf. Did she ask for me? See, Ruffle, who it is. [*Exit.*

Ser. No, your honour; but she looked quite flustrated.

Daf. Well, go below, and be careful not to let any old gentleman in this morning; and, d'ye hear? if any of the neighbours should inquire who the lady is, you may say it is a relation;—and be sure smile, do you hear? when you tell them so.

Ser. I shall, your honour—He, he, he, I am never melancholy. [*Exit.*

Daf. That fellow's a character.

Enter RUFFLE.

Ruf. Sir, it is Mrs Dotterel; she has had a terrible quarrel with her husband about your letter, and has something to say of consequence to you both—she must see you, she says.

Daf. I won't see her——Why would you say that I was at home——You know I hate to be alone with them, and she's so violent too——Well, well, shew her up——This is so unlucky——

Ruf. He hates to see duns he never intends to pay. [*Exit* RUFFLE.

Daf. What shall I do with her? This is worse than meeting her husband with a blunderbuss in a saw-pit.

Enter MRS DOTTEREL, *and* RUFFLE.

Dear Mrs Dotterel, this is so obliging——— Ruffle, don't let a soul come near me. [*Aloud.*] —And hark'e, don't leave us long together, and let every body up that comes. [*Aside.*

Ruf. What a deal of trouble here is about nothing! [*Exit* RUFFLE.

Mrs Dot. In the name of virtue, Mr Daffodil, I hope you have not given any private orders, that may in the least derogate from that absolute confidence which I place in your honour?

Daf. You may be perfectly easy under this roof, madam. I hope, I am polite enough not to let my passions of any kind run too great lengths in my own house.

Mrs Dot. Nothing but absolute necessity could have made me take this imprudent step—I am ready to faint with my apprehensions——Heigh ho!———

Daf. Heaven forbid!—I'll call for some assistance. [*Going to ring.*

Mrs Dot. Let your bell alone! [*Stopping him.*] You're always calling for assistance, I think—you never give one time to come to one's self—Mr Dotterel has seen your letter, and vows vengeance and destruction—Why would you be so violent and imprudent?

Daf. The devil was in me, madam; but I repent it from my soul; it has cured me of being violent.

Mrs Dot. Come, come, don't take it too deeply neither; I thought it proper, at all hazards, to let you know what had happened, and to intreat you, by that affection you have sworn to me, to be careful of my reputation.

Daf. That I will indeed, madam; we can't be too careful.

Mrs Dot. Well, Mr Daffodil, I am an unhappy woman—married to one I cannot love; and loving one I ought to shun—It is a terrible situation, Mr Daffodil——

Daf. It is indeed, madam—I am in a terrible one too—Would I was well out of it! [*Aside.*

Mrs Dot. Do you know, Mr Daffodil, that if I had not been very religious, my passions would have undone me——But you must give me time, for nothing but that, and keeping the best company, will ever conquer my prejudices———

Daf. I should be very ungenerous not to allow you time, madam—three weeks or a month, I hope, will do the business—Though, by my honour, I got the better of mine in half the time—What is Ruffle doing? [*Aside.*

Mrs Dot. He's very cold, methinks; but I'll try him further—Look'e, Mr Daffodil, you must curb your passions, and keep your distance—— Fire is catching, and one does not know the consequences when once it begins to spread.

Daf. As you say, madam, fire is catching; 'tis dangerous to play with it; and as I am of the tinder-kind—as one may say—we had better, as you say—madam—change the subject—Pray did you ever hear of the pug-dog that you advertised? It was a very pretty creature—what was his name, madam?

Mrs Dot. Daffodil, sir! [*Stifling her passion.*

Daf. Madam!

Mrs Dot. Could I love and esteem any thing, and not call it Daffodil?—What a wretch! [*Aside.*

Daf. You do me honour, madam—I don't like her looks; I must change the discourse. [*Aside.*] Upon my soul, Mrs Dotterel, this struggle is too much for man: My passions are now tearing me to pieces, and if you will stay, by heaven I will not answer for the consequences!

Mrs Dot. Consequences! What consequences! Thou wretched, base, false, worthless animal!

Daf. You do me honour! [*Boxing.*

Mrs Dot. Canst thou think that I am so blinded by my passion, not to see thy treacherous, mean, unmanly evasions?—I have long suspected your infamy, and having this proof of it, I could stab your treacherous heart, and my own weak one—Don't offer to stir, or ring your bell; for, by Heavens, I'll—— [*Catches hold of him.*

Daf. I stir! I am never so happy, as when I am in your company.

Mrs Dot. Thou liest: Thou art never so happy as when thou art deceiving, and betraying our foolish sex———and all for what? Why, for the poor reputation of having that, which thou hast neither power nor spirit to enjoy.

Daf. Ha! I hear somebody coming—Now for a rapture [*Aside.*] Talk not of power or spirit—Heaven, that has made you fair, has made me strong——O! forgive the madness which your beauty has occasioned!

[*Throws himself upon his knees.*

Enter Servant.

Ser. The marquis of Macaroons——— [*Exit Servant.*

Enter SOPHIA.

Mrs Dot. Ha! [*Screams.*] I am betrayed!—[*They all stare, and* DAFFODIL *seemingly astonished.*]

Sop. Mrs Dotterel, by all that's virtuous!—[*Aside.*]—Signior Daffodillo—*resto confuso*, tat I am com *si mal-a-proposito.*

Daf. Dear marquis, no excuse, I beg—nothing at all—a relation of mine—my sister only—Miss Daffodil; this is il Merchese de Maccaroni, an intimate of sir Charles Vainlove's—this was

lucky.—[*Aside.*]—Well, then, my dear sister, I will wait upon you to-morrow, and settle the whole affair.—[*Aloud.*]—I am the most miserable of mortals, and have lost the most precious moments of my life.

[*Aside to* MRS DOT.

Mrs Dot. You are a villain! I despise you, and detest you, and will never see you more.

[*Exit* MRS DOT.

Daf. Ha, ha, ha! my sister has a noble spirit, my lord.

Sop. Mi dispiace infinamente—it tisplis me, tat I haf *interrumpato gli affari* of you famili.

Daf. It is the old family business, my lord; and so old, that, by my honour, I am quite tired of it.

Sop. I hate him already.—[*Aside.*]—Signor Daffodillo, she is *una belissima sorella, in verità*, a very prit' sis' intit.

Daf. I must confess to you, my lord, that my sister is a young distressed damsel, married to an old gentleman of the neighbourhood, ha, ha, ha!

Sop. O Cara Inghilterra! vat a fortunata contrée is tis! te olt men marri de yong fine girl, and te yong fine girl visite te yong signors—*O, preciosa libertà!*

Daf. Indeed, my lord, men of fashion, here, have some small privileges; we gather our roses without fear of thorns—husbands and brothers don't deal in poison and stilettos, as they do with you.

Sop. Il nostro amico, signor Carlo, has tol me a tousant volti, dat you vas de Orlando Innamorato himself.

Daf. But not Furioso, I can assure you, my lord, ha, ha, ha! I am for variety, and badinage, without affection—reputation is the great ornament, and ease the great happiness of life—to ruin women would be troublesome; to trifle and make love to them, amuses one. I use my women as daintily as my tokay; I merely sip of both, but more than half a glass palls me.

Sop. Il mio proprio gusto—Tukely is right; he's a villain.—[*Aside.*]—Signor Daffodillo, vil you do me de favor to give me stranger, *una introduzione* to some of your signorine; let *vostro amico* taste a littel, *un poco* of your *dulce* tokay.

Daf. O, certamente! I have have half a hundred signorines at your service.

Sop. Multo obligato, signor Daffodillo.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Here is a letter for your honour. [*Surlily.*

Daf. What is the matter with the fellow?

Ser. Matter, your honour! the lady that went out just now, gave me such a souse on the ear, as I made my bow to her, that I could scarce tell, for a minute, whether I had a head or no.

Daf. Ha, ha! poor fellow! there's smart money for you.—[*Gives him money.*]—[*Exit Ser.*]—Will your lordship give me leave?

Sop. Senza ceremonie—now for it. [*Aside*

DAFFODIL *reads.*

'SIR,

'I shall return from the country next week, 'and shall hope to meet you at Lady Fanny Pewit's 'assembly next Wednesday.

'I am very much your humble servant,

'SOPHIA SPRIGHTLY.'

My lord marquis, here is a letter has started game for you already—the most lucky thought imaginable!

Sop. Cosa è questa—cosa, è—vat is?

Daf. There are two fine girls, you must know, cousins, who live together; this is a letter from one of them, Sophia is her name; I have addressed them both, but as matters become a little serious on their side, I must raise a jealousy between the friends; discover to one the treachery of the other; and so, in the bustle, steal off as quietly as I can.

Sop. O! Spiritoso amico—I can scarce contain myself. [*Aside.*

Daf. Before the mine is sprung, I will introduce you into the town.

Sop. You are great generalissimo *in verità md.* I feel *in mio core* vat de poor *infelice* Sophia vil feel for the loss of signor Daffadillo.

Daf. Yes, poor creature! I believe she'll have a pang or two—tender indeed! and I believe will be unhappy for some time.

Sop. What a monster! [*Aside.*

Daf. You must dine with our club to-day, where I will introduce you to more of sir Charles's friends, all men of figure and fashion.

Sop. I must primo haf my lettere, dat your *amici* may be *assicurati* dat I am no impostore.

Daf. In the name of politeness, my lord marquis, don't mention your letters again; none but a justice of peace, or a constable, would ever ask for a certificate of a man's birth, parentage, and education, ha, ha, ha!

Sop. Viva, viva il signor Daffodillo! You shall be *il mio conduttorè in tutte le partite* of love and pleasure.

Daf. With all my heart! you must give me leave, now, my lord, to put on my clothes—in the mean time, if your lordship will step into my study there, if you chuse music, there is a guitar, and some Venetian ballads; or, if you like reading, there's infidelity and bawdy novels for you; call Ruffle, there. [*Exit* DAF.

Sop. [*Looking after him.*]—I am shocked at him; he is really more abandoned than Tukely's jealousy described him. I have got my proofs, and will not venture any further. I am vexed that I should be angry at him, when I should only despise him: but I am so angry, that I could almost wish myself a man, that my breeches might demand satisfaction for the injury he has done my petticoats. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—MRS DAMPLY'S *lodgings.*

Enter ARABELLA *and* SOPHIA.

Sop. IN short, his own declarations, the unexpected meeting of Mrs Dotterel, his usage of my letter, and twenty things beside, determined me not to go among the set of them—So, making the best excuse I could, I got quit of him and his companions.

Ara. All this may be true, Sophy——every young fellow has his vanities; fashion has made such irregularities accomplishments, and the man may be worth having, for all your discoveries.

Sop. What! an abandoned, rash, profligate male-coquette! a wretch, who can assume passions he never feels, and sport with our sex's frailties—fie, fie, Bell!

Ara. Well, well, you are too angry to be merciful; if he is such a monster, I am glad you are out of his clutches, and that you can so easily resign him to another.

Sop. To another! there is not that woman, be she ever so handsome, that I hate enough, to wish her so much evil; and happy it is for you, Bell, that you have a heart to resist his allurements.

Ara. Yes, I thank my stars—I am not so susceptible of impressions of that kind—and yet—I won't swear—if an agreeable man—I—I—

Sop. No, no, Bell, you are not absolute stone—you, you may be mollified—she is confounded— [*Aside.*

Ara. Surely he has not betrayed me—'tis impossible! I cannot be deceived. [*Aside.*

Sop. Well, shall we go in to the ladies and Mr Tukely? Were they not surprized when he opened the business to them?

Ara. 'Twas the finest scene imaginable—You could see, though they all endeavoured to hide their liking to Daffodil, all were uneasy at Tukely's discovery. At first, they objected to his scheme; but they began to listen to his proposal the moment I was called out to you; what farther he intends, is a secret to us all; but here he comes, and without the ladies.

Enter TUKELY.

Tuke. Pray, Miss Bell—Bless me! Miss Sophy returned! I dare not ask—and yet, if my eyes do not flatter my heart—your looks—

Sop. Don't rely too much upon looks, Mr Tukely.

Tuke. Madam—why, sure——

Sop. Don't imagine, I say, that you can always see the mind in the face.

Tuke. I can see, madam, that your mind is not disposed to wish, or make me happy.

Sop. Did not I bid you not to rely upon looks? for, do you know, now, that my mind is at this time most absolutely disposed—to do every thing that you would have me. [*Curtsies.*

Tuke. Then I have nothing more to wish, or ask of fortune.

[*Kneels, and kisses her hand.*

Ara. Come, come; this is no time to attend to one, when you have so many ladies to take care of.

Tuke. I will not yet enquire into your adventures, till I have accomplished my own. The ladies within have at last agreed to attend me this evening; where, if you have a mind to finish the picture you have begun this morning, an opportunity may offer.

Sop. I am contented with my sketch—however, I'll make one; and if you have an occasion for a second in any thing—I am your man——command me.

Tuke. A match—from this moment I take you as my second; nay, my first, in every circumstance of our future lives.

Ara. Mighty pretty, truly! and so I am to stand cooling my heels, here, while you are making yourselves ridiculous?

Sop. Bell's in the right—to business, to business—Mr Tukely, you must introduce me to the ladies; I can at least make as good a figure as Mr Daffodil among them.

[*Exit* SOP. *and* TUKE.

Ara. When Daffodil's real inclinations are known, how those poor wretches will be disappointed! [*Exit* ARA.

SCENE II.—*The club-room.*

LORD RACKET, SIR TAN-TIVY, SIR WILLIAM WHISTER, SPINNER *writing, and* DAFFODIL.

[*Waiter behind.*

Daf. What do you say, my lord? that I don't do it in an hour?

Lord Rac. Not in an hour and a half, George.

Daf. Done with you, my lord! I'll take your seven to five—seventy pound to fifty!

Lord Rac. Done—I'll lay the odds again, with you, sir William, and with you, sir Tivy.

Sir Wil. Not I, faith; Daffodil has too many fine women—he'll never do it.

Daf. I'll go into the country for a week, and not a petticoat shall come near me—I'll take the odds again.

Sir Tan. Done, Daffodil!

Lord Rac. You are to hop upon one leg, without changing, mind that—Set it down, Spinner.

Spin. I have—Shall I read it?

Lord Rac. Silence in the court.

Spin. [*Reads.*]—'Lord Racket has betted seventy pounds to fifty, with the honourable 'George Daffodil, that the latter does not walk 'from Buckingham-gate to the Bun-house, at 'Chelsea, eat a bun there, run back to the turnpike, and from thence hop upon one leg, with 'the other tied to the cue of his wig, to Buckingham-gate again, in an hour and a half.'

Daf. I say, done!

Lord Rac. And done!

Sir Wil. Consider your women—you'll never do it, George.

Daf. Not do it!—[*Hops.*]—Why, I'll get a Chelsea pensioner shall do it in an hour, with his wooden leg———What day shall we fix for it?

Sir Wil. The first of April, to be sure.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord Rac. Come, Daffodil, read the betts and matches of to-day—then let us finish our champaigne, and go to the opera.

Daf. [*Reads.*]—'March 24, 1757, Sir Tan-'Tivy has pitted lady Pettitoe, against dowager 'lady Periwinkle, with sir William Whister, for 'five hundred pounds.' I'll pit my uncle, lord Chalkstone, against them both.

Sir Tan. Done!

Lord Rac. The odds are against you, Daffodil —my lord has got to plain Nantz, now, every morning.

Daf. And the ladies have been at it, to my knowledge, this half year.

Lord Rac. Good again, George!

Sir Wil. [*Reads.*]—'The honourable George 'Daffodil has betted one hundred pounds, with 'sir William Whister, that he produces a gentle-'man, before the fifth of June next, that shall 'live for five days successively, without eating, 'drinking, or sleeping.' He must have no books, George?

Daf. No, no; the gentleman I mean, can't read.

Sir Wil. 'Tis not yourself, George!

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis impossible; it must kill him.

Daf. Why, then, I'll lose my bet.—[*Reads.*]—'Lord Racket has matched sir Joslin Jolly, a-'gainst major Calipash, with sir Tan-Tivy, to run 'fifty yards upon the Mall, after dinner; if either 'tumbles, the wager is lost—for fifty pounds.'

Spin. I'll lay fifty more, neither of them run the ground in half an hour.

Daf. Not in an hour!

Sir Tan. Done, Daffodil! I'll bet you a hundred of that.

Daf. Done, baronet! I'll double it, if you will.

Sir Tan. With all my heart—book it, Spinner. [SPINNER *writes.*

Lord Rac. You'll certainly lose, George.

Daf. Impossible, my lord; sir Joslin is damnably out of wind.

Lord Rac. What, asthmatic?

Daf. No, quite cured of his asthma—he died yesterday morning—Bite.

[*All.*] Bravo, George!

Lord Rac. Now you talk of dying, how does your cousin Dizzy?

Daf. Lingers on, better and worse—Lives upon asses milk, Panada, and Eringo root.

Lord Rac. You'll have a wind-fall there, George; a good two thousand a-year.

Daf. 'Tis better, my lord; but I love Dick so well, and have had so many obligations to him —he saved my life once—that I could wish him better health.

Sir Wil. Or in a better place; there's devilish fine timber in Staunton woods.

Sir Tan. Down with them, Daffodil.

Lord Rac. But let Dizzy drop first; a little blast will fell him.

Enter DIZZY.

Diz. Not so little as you may imagine, my lord—Hugh, hugh—— [*Coughs.*

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Daf. Angels and ministers! what, cousin! We were got among your trees.

Diz. You are heartily welcome to any one of them, gentlemen, for a proper purpose——hugh, hugh!

Lord Rac. Well said, Dick! How quick his wit, and how youthful the rogue looks!

Daf. Bloomy and plump—the country air is a fine thing, my lord.

Diz. Well, well, be as jocular as you please; I am not so ill as you may wish or imagine; I can walk to Knightsbridge in an hour, for a hundred pounds.

Lord Rac. I bet you a hundred of that, Dizzy!

Daf. I'll lay you a hundred, Dick, that I drive a sow and pigs to your lodgings, before you can get there.

Diz. Done, I say! [*Draws his purse.*] Done! Two hundred—done—three!

Lord Rac. I'll take Dizzy against your sow and pigs.

Sir Wil. I take the field against Dizzy.

Lord Rac. Done!

Spin. Done!

Diz. Damn your sow and pigs! I am so sick with the thoughts of running with them, that I shall certainly faint. [*Smells to a bottle.*]—Hugh, hugh!

Daf. Cousin Dizzy can't bear the mention of pork; he hates it——I knew it would work. [*Aside to the rest.*

Diz. I wish you had not mentioned it—I can't stay—Damn your sow and pigs!—Here, waiter, call a chair—Damn your sow and pigs!—hugh, hugh! [*Exit* DIZZY.

Daf. Poor Dizzy! What a passion he is in! Ha, ha, ha!

Lord Rac. The woods are yours, George; you may whet the axe; Dizzy won't live a month.

Daf. Pooh, this is nothing; he was always weakly.

Sir Wil. 'Tis a family misfortune, Daffodil.

Enter Waiter.

Wait. Mr Dizzy, gentlemen, dropped down at the stair-foot, and the cook has carried him behind the bar.

Daf. Lay him upon a bed, and he'll come to himself. [*Exit Waiter.*

Lord Rac. I'll bet fifty pound that he don't live till morning.

Sir Wil. I'll lay six to four he don't live a week.

Daf. I'll take your fifty pound.

Spin. I'll take your lordship again.

Lord Rac. Done with you both!

Sir Tan. I'll take it again.

Lord Rac. Done, done, done! but I bar all assistance to him; not a physician or surgeon sent for, or I am off.

Daf. No, no; we are upon honour. There shall be none, else it would be a bubble bet—There shall be none.

Sir Wil. If I were my lord, now, the physicians should attend him.

Enter Waiter, with a letter.

Wait. A letter for his honour.

[*Gives it to* DAFFODIL, *who reads it to himself.*

Sir Wil. Daffodil, remember the first of April, and let the women alone.

Daf. Upon my soul you have hit it! 'tis a woman, faith! Something very particular; and if you are in spirits for a scheme——

Lord Rac. Ay, ay; come, come; a scheme, a scheme!

Daf. There, then, have among you!

[*Throws the letter upon the table.*

Lord Rac. [*Reads, all looking on.*] Hum—— 'If the liking your person be a sin, what woman 'is not guilty?—hum, hum———at the end of 'the Bird-cage Walk—about seven—where the 'darkness and privacy will befriend my blushes; 'I will convince you what trust I have in your 'secrecy and honour. Yours, 'INCOGNITA.'

Daf. Will you go?

Lord Rac. What do you propose!

Daf. To go—If after I have been with her half an hour, you'll come upon us, and have a blow up.

Sir Wil. There's a gallant for you!

Daf. Prithee, sir William, be quiet; must a man be in love with every woman that invites him!

Sir Wil. No; but he should be honourable to them, George, and rather conceal a woman's weakness, than expose it—I hate this work—so, I'll go the coffee-house. [*Exit* SIR WILLIAM.

Lord Rac. Let him go—don't mind him, George; he's married, and past fifty—this will be a fine frolic—devilish high!

Daf. Very!—Well, I'll go and prepare myself; put on my surtout, and take my chair to Buckingham-Gate. I know the very spot.

Lord Rac. We'll come with flambeaux; you must be surprised, and———

Daf. I know what to do—Here, waiter, waiter!

Enter Waiter.

How does cousin Dizzy?

Wait. Quite recovered, sir. He is in the Phœnix with two ladies, and has ordered a boiled chicken and jellies.

Lord Rac. There's a blood for you! without a drop in his veins.

Daf. Do you stay with him, then, till I have secured my lady; and in half an hour from this time, come away, and bring Dizzy with you.

Lord Rac. If he'll leave the ladies—Don't the Italian marquis dine with us to-morrow?

Daf. Certainly.

Lord Rac. Well, do you mind your business, and I'll speak to the cook to shew his genius—Allons! [*Exit* DAFF.] Tom, bid the cook attend me to-morrow morning, on special affairs.

[*Exit* LORD RACKET, &c.

2d Wait. I shall, my lord.

1st Wait. I'll lay you, Tom, five sixpences to three, that my lord wins his bett with his honour Daffodil.

2d Wait. Done with you, Harry; I'll take your half-crown to eighteenpence——

[*Bell rings within.*

1st Wait. Coming, sir; I'll make it shillings, Tom.

2d Wait. No, Harry, you've the best on't. [*Bell rings.*] Coming, sir. I'll take five shillings to two. [*Bell rings.*] Coming, sir.——

1st Wait. Coming, sir.——No, five to three.

2d Wait. Shillings?——Coming, sir.

1st Wait. No—Sixpences——

2d Wait. And done. [*Bell rings.*] Coming, sir.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter ARABELLA, MRS DAMPLY, LADY FAN PEWIT, MRS DOTTEREL, TUKELY *in women's clothes, and* SOPHIA *in men's.*

Ladies. Ha, ha, ha!

Ara. What a figure! and what a scheme!

Tuke. Dear ladies, be as merry with my figure as you please!——Yet you shall see, this figure, aukward as it is, shall be preferred in its turn, as well as you have been.

Sop. Why will you give yourself this unnecessary trouble, Mr Tukely, to convince these la-

dies, who had rather still be deluded, and will hate your friendship for breaking the charm?

Ara. My dear cousin, though you are satisfied, these ladies are not; and, if they have their particular reasons for their infidelity, pray, let them enjoy it, 'till they have other proofs than your prejudices.

Sop. Ay, Bell, we have all our prejudices.

Tuke. What signifies reasoning, when we are going upon the experiment? Dispose of yourselves behind those trees, and I will repair to the place of appointment, and draw him hither; but you promise to contain yourselves, let what will happen. Hear, and see; but be silent——

[*Exit* TUKELY.

Sop. A severe injunction, indeed, ladies—But I must to my post. [*Exit* SOP.

Mrs Damp. If he's a villain, I can never hold!

Lady Pew. I shall tear his eyes out!

Mrs Dot. For my part, if I was unmarried, I should not think him worth my anger.

Ara. But as you are, madam——

Mrs Dot. I understand your insinuations, Miss Bell; but my character and conduct need no justification.

Ara. I beg pardon, madam; I intended no offence.—But haste to your posts, ladies; the enemy's at hand. [*They retire behind the trees.*

Enter TUKELY *and* DAFFODIL.

Tuke. [*In a woman's voice.*] For Heaven's sake, let us be cautious!——I am sure I heard a noise.

Daf. 'Twas nothing but your fear, my angel! ——don't be alarmed——There can be no danger, while we have love and darkness to befriend us.

Tuke. Bless me, how my heart beats!

Daf. Poor soul! what a fright it is in!—— You must not give way to these alarms——Were you as well convinced of my honour, as I am of your charms, you would have nothing to fear—

[*Squeezes her hand.*

Ara. Upon my word!— [*Aside.*

Mrs Damp. So, so, so! [*Aside.*

Tuke. Hold, sir; you must take no liberties—But, if you have the least feeling for an unhappy woman, urged by her passion to this imprudent step, assist me—forgive me—let me go.

Daf. Can you doubt my honour? Can you doubt my love? What assurances can I give you to abate your fears?

Mrs Dot. Very slender ones, I can assure her. [*Aside.*

Tuke. I deserve to suffer all I feel——For what, but the most blinded passion, could induce me to declare myself to one, whose amours and infidelities are the common topic of conversation!

Daf. Flattering creature! [*Aside.*]——May I never know your dear name, see your charming face, touch your soft hand, or hear your sweet voice, if I am not more sincere in my affection for this little finger, than for all the sex besides.

[*The ladies seem astonished.*

Tuke. Except the widow Damply.

Daf. She! Do you know her, madam?

Tuke. I have not that honour.

Daf. I thought so—Did you never see her, madam, nodling and gogling in her old-fashioned heavy chariot, drawn by a pair of lean hackney horses, with a fat blackamoor footman behind, in a scanty livery, red greasy stockings, and a dirty turban? [*The widow seems disordered.*

Tuke. All which may be only a foil to her beauty. [*Sighs.*

Daf. Beauty! don't sigh, madam; she is past forty, wears a wig, and has lost two of her fore teeth.——And, then, she has so long a beard upon her upper lip, and takes so much Spanish snuff, that she looks, for all the world, like the Great Mogul in petticoats; ha, ha—

Mrs Damp. What falsehood and ingratitude! [*Aside.*

Tuke. Could I descend to the slander of the town, there is a married lady—

Daf. Poor Mrs Dotterel, you mean?——

Mrs Dot. Why, am I to be mentioned!—— I have nothing to do——

Mrs Damp. Nay, nay; you must have your share of the panegyric.

Tuke. She is young, and has wit.

Daf. She's an idiot, madam; and as fools are generally loving, she has forgot all her obligations to old Mr Dotterel, who married her without a petticoat; and now seizes upon every young fellow she can lay her hands upon—she has spoiled me three suits of clothes, with tearing the flaps and sleeves. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs Dot. Monster of iniquity!

Daf. She has even stormed me in my own house; but, with all my faults, madam, you'll never find me over-fond of age, or ignorance.

Mrs Damp. I could tear him to pieces!

Mrs Dot. I *will* tear him to pieces!

Ara. Be quiet, and we'll all tear him to pieces.

Tuke. He has swallowed the hook, and can't escape. [*Aside.*

Daf. What do you say, madam?

Tuke. I am only sighing, sir.

Daf. Fond creature! [*Aside.*] I know there are a thousand stories about me: You have heard, too, of Lady Fanny Pewit, I suppose? Don't be alarmed.

Tuke. I can't help it, sir. She is a fine woman, and a woman of quality.

Daf. A fine woman, perhaps, for a woman of quality—but she is an absolute old maid, madam, almost as thick as she is long—middle-aged, homely, and wanton! That's her character.

Lady Pew. Then, there is no sincerity in man. [*Going.*

Ara. Positively, you shan't stir.

Daf. Upon my soul, I pity the poor creature!

——She is now upon her last legs. If she does not run away with some foolish gentleman this winter, she'll return into the country, and marry her footman, ha, ha, ha!

Lady Pew. My footman shall break his bones, I can tell him that.

Daf. Hush, madam! I protest, I thought I heard a voice—I wonder they don't come. [*Aside.*

Tuke. 'Twas only I, Mr Daffodil—I was murmuring to you. [*Sighs.*

Daf. Pretty murmurer!—'Egad, if they don't come soon, the lady will grow fond. [*Aside.*

Tuke. But among your conquests, Mr Daffodil, you forget Miss Sophy Sprightly.

Daf. And her cousin Arabella.—I was coming to them; poor, silly, good-natured, loving fools! I made my addresses to one through pique, and the other for pity; that was all.

Tuke. O, that I could believe you!

Daf. Don't be uneasy! I'll tell you how it was, madam—You must know, there is a silly, self-sufficient fellow, one Tukely——

Tuke. So, so.—[*Aside.*]—I know him a little.

Daf. I am sorry for it—The less you know of him, the better; the fellow pretended to look fierce at me, for which I resolved to have his mistress: So I threw in my line, and without much trouble, hooked her. Her poor cousin, too, nibbled at the bait, and was caught. So I have had my revenge upon Tukely, and now I shall willingly resign poor Sophy, and throw him in her cousin, for a make-weight, ha, ha, ha!

Lady Pew. This is some comfort, at least.

Ara. Your ladyship is better than you was. [*Noise without.*

Tuke. I vow, I hear a noise.—What shall we do? It comes this way.

Daf. They can't see us, my dear.—I wish my friends would come. [*Aside.*] Don't whisper, or breathe.

Enter SOPHIA, *in a surtout, and slouched hat.*

Sop. If I could but catch her at her pranks—she certainly must be this way—for the chair is waiting at the end of Rosamond's pond—I have thrown one of her chairmen into it—and, if I could but catch her—

Tuke. O, sir! my passion has undone me—I am discovered; it is my husband, sir George, and he is looking for me!

Daf. The devil it is! Why, then, madam, the best way will be for you to go to him—and let me sneak off the other way.

Tuke. Go to him, sir! What can I say to him?

Daf. Any thing, madam—Say you had the vapours, and wanted air.

Tuke. Lord, sir! he is the most passionate of mortals; and I am afraid he is in liquor, too; and, then, he is mad!

Sop. If I could but catch her——— [*Looking about.*

Daf. For your sake, madam, I'll make the best of my way home—— [*Going.*

Tuke. What! would you leave me to the fury of an enraged husband!—Is that your affection! [*Holds him.*

Sop. If I could but catch her—Ha! what's that? I saw something move in the dark——the point of my sword shall tickle it out, whatever it is. [*Draws, and goes towards them.*

Tuke. For Heaven's sake draw, and fight him, while I make my escape!

Daf. Fight him! 'twould be cowardly to fight in the dark, and with a drunken man—I'll call the sentry.

Tuke. And expose us to the world?

Daf. I would to Heaven we were! [*Aside. He comes forward.*] Let me go, madam; you pinch me to the bone.

Tuke. He won't know us—I have my mask on.

Ladies. Ha, ha, ha!

Sop. What, is the devil and his imps playing at blind man's buff? Ay, ay; here he is, indeed; Satan himself, dressed like a fine gentleman—Come, Mr Devil, out with your pitchfork, and let us take a thrust or two.

Daf. You mistake me, sir, I am not the person; indeed, I am not; I know nothing of your wife, sir George; and if you know how little I care for the whole sex, you would not be so furious with an innocent man.

Sop. Who are you, then? And what are you doing with that blackamoor lady there——dancing a saraband with a pair of castanets? Speak, sir!

Daf. Pray forbear, sir; here's company coming that will satisfy you in every thing—Hallo, hallo—Here, here, here! [*Hallo's faintly.*] my lord, my lord!—Spinner—Dizzy—Hallo!

Enter LORD RACKET, SIR TANTIVY, SPINNER, *and* DIZZY, *with torches.*

Lord Rac. What's the matter here?—Who calls for help?

Daf. [*Running to them with his sword drawn.*] O, my friends, I have been wishing for you this half hour! I have been set upon by a dozen fellows—They have all made their escape, but this—My arm is quite dead—I have been at cart and tierce with them all, for near a quarter of an hour.

Sop. In buckram, my lord!—He was got with my property here, and I would have chastised him for it, if your coming had not prevented it.

Daf. Let us throw the rascal into Rosamond's pond.

Lord Rac. Come sir, can you swim?

[*All going up.* TUKELY *snatches* SOPHIA'S *sword, and she runs behind him.*

Tuke. I'll defend you, my dear!—What, would

you murder a man, and lie with his wife, too?—Oh! you are a wicked gentleman, Mr Daffodil.

[*Attacks* DAFFODIL.

Daf. Why, the devil's in the woman, I think!

[*All the ladies advance from behind.*

Ladies. Ha, ha, ha! your humble servant, Mr Daffodil—ha, ha, ha! [*Curtsying.*

Daf. This is all enchantment!

Lady Pew. No, sir, the enchantment is broke; and the old maid, sir, homely and wanton, before she retires into the country, has the satisfaction of knowing that the agreeable Mr Daffodil is a much more contemptible mortal, than the footman which his goodness has been pleased to marry her to.

Ladies. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs Damp. Would Mr Daffodil please to have a pinch of Spanish snuff out of the great mogul's box? 'Tis the best thing in the world for low spirits. [*Offers her box.*

Ladies. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs Dot. If a fool may not be permitted to speak, Mr Daffodil, let her at least be permitted to laugh at so fine a gentleman—Ha, ha, ha!

Ara. Were you as sensible of shame, as you are of fear, the sight of me, whom you loved for pity, would be revenge sufficient—But I can forgive your baseness to me, much easier than I can myself, for my behaviour to this happy couple.

Daf. Who the devil are they?

Ara. The marquis and marchioness of Macaroni, ladies—Ha, ha, ha!

Sop. Ha! Mio Carrissimo Amico, il signior Daffodillo!

Daf. How! Tukely and Sophia!—If I don't wake soon, I shall wish never to wake again!

Sop. Who bids fairest now for Rosamond's pond?

Lord Rac. What, in the name of wonder, is all this business? I don't understand it.

Diz. Nor I neither; but 'tis very drole, faith!

Tuke. The mystery will clear in a moment.

Daf. Don't give yourself any trouble, Mr Tukely; things are pretty clear as they are—The night's cool, and my cousin Dizzy, here, is an invalid—If you please, another time, when there is less company.—[*Ladies laugh.*]—The ladies are pleased to be merry, and you are pleased to be a little angry; and so, for the sake of tranquillity—I'll go to the opera.

[DAFFODIL *sneaks out by degrees.*

Lord Rac. This is a fine blow-up, indeed!—Ladies, your humble servant—Hallo! Daffodil.

[*Exit.*

Diz. I'll lay you a hundred, that my cousin never intrigues again—George! George! Don't run—hugh, hugh——— [*Exit.*

Tuke. As my satisfaction is complete, I have none to ask of Mr Daffodil. I forgive his behaviour to me, as it has hastened and confirmed my happiness here. [*To* SOPHIA.]—But as a friend to you, ladies, I shall insist upon his making you ample satisfaction: However, this benefit will arise, that you will hereafter equally detest and shun these destroyers of your reputation.

In you coquettry is a loss of fame;
But, in our sex, 'tis that detested name,
That marks the want of manhood, virtue, sense and shame.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

UPHOLSTERER.

BY

MURPHY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
QUIDNUNC, *the upholsterer.*	HARRIET, *daughter to* QUIDNUNC.
PAMPHLET, *a hackney scribbler.*	TERMAGANT, *her maid.*
RAZOR, *a barber, crazy with politics.*	*Maid to* FEEBLE.
BELMOUR, *in love with* HARRIET.	
ROVEWELL, *his friend.*	
FEEBLE, *uncle to* HARRIET.	
Watchman.	
BRISK, *servant to* BELMOUR.	
CODICIL, *a lawyer.*	

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—BELMOUR'S *lodging.*

Enter BELMOUR, *beating* BRISK.

Brisk. MR Belmour!—Let me die, sir—as I hope to be saved, sir——

Bel. Sirrah! Rogue! Villain!—I'll teach you, I will, you rascal! to speak irreverently of her I love!

Brisk. As I am a sinner, sir, I only meant—

Bel. Only meant! You could not mean it, jackanapes—you had no meaning, booby.

Brisk. Why, no, sir—that's the very thing, sir—I had no meaning.

Bel. Then, sirrah, I'll make you know your meaning for the future.

Brisk. Yes, sir—to be sure, sir——and yet upon my word, if you would be but a little cool, sir, you'd find I'm not much to blame. Besides, master, you can't conceive the good it would do your health, if you will but keep your temper a little.

Bel. Mighty well, sir, give your advice!

Brisk. Why, really, now, this same love hath metamorphosed us both very strangely, master: for, to be free, here have we been at this work these six weeks, stark-staring mad in love with a couple of baggages not worth a groat: and yet, Heaven help us! they have as much pride as comes to the share of a lady of quality, before she has been caught in the fact with a handsome young fellow, or indeed after she has been caught, for that matter——

Bel. You won't have done, rascal!

Brisk. In short, my young mistress and her maid have as much pride and poverty as—as—no matter what; they have the devil and all—

when, at the same time, every body knows the old broken upholsterer, Miss Harriet's father, might give us all he has in the world, and not eat the worse pudding on a Sunday for it.

Bel. Impious, execrable atheist! What, detract from Heaven? I'll reform your notions, I will, you saucy—— [*Beats him.*

Brisk. Nay, but my dear sir—a little patience—not so hard——

Enter ROVEWELL.

Rove. Belmour, your servant—What, at loggerheads with my old friend Brisk?

Bel. Confusion!—Mr Rovewell, your servant—this is your doing, hang-dog!—Jack Rovewell, I am glad to see thee——

Rove. Brisk used to a good servant—he has not been tampering with any of his master's girls, has he?

Bel. Do you know, Rovewell, that he has had the impudence to talk detractingly and profanely of my mistress?——

Brisk. For which, sir, I have suffered inhumanly, and most unchristian-like, I assure you.

Bel. Will you leave prating, booby?

Rove. Well, but Belmour, where does she live? I am but just arrived, you know, and I'll go and beat up her quarters.

Bel. [*Half aside.*] Beat up her quarters!—— [*Looks at him smilingly, then half aside.*

Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
[*Stands musing.*

Rove. Hey! what, fallen into a reverie? Prithee, Brisk, what does all this mean?

Brisk. Why, sir, you must know——I am over head and ears in love.

Rove. But I mean your master; what ails him?

Brisk. That's the very thing I am going to tell you, sir—As I said, sir—I am over head and ears in love with a whimsical queer kind of a piece here in the neighbourhood; and so nothing can serve my master, but he must fall in love with the mistress. Look at him now, sir——

[BELMOUR *continues musing and muttering to himself.*]

Rove. Ha, ha, ha! Poor Belmour, I pity thee, with all my heart——

[*Strikes him on the shoulder.*

Ye gods, annihilate both space and time,
And make two lovers happy.

Bel. My dear Rovewell, such a girl! Ten thousand cupids play about her mouth, you rogue!

Rove. Ten thousand pounds had better play about her pocket. What fortune has she?

Brisk. Heaven help us, not much to crack of.

Bel. Not much to crack of, Mr Brazen! Prithe, Rovewell, how can you be so ungenerous as to ask such a question? You know I don't mind fortune; though, by the way she has an uncle, who is determined to settle very handsomely upon her, and on the strength of that does she give herself innumerable airs.

Rove. Fortune not to be minded! I'll tell you what, Belmour, though you have a good one already, there's no kind of inconvenience in a little more. I am sure if I had not minded fortune, I might have been in Jamaica still, not worth a sugar-cane; but the widow Molosses took a fancy to me—Heaven, or a worse destiny, has taken a fancy to her; and so, after ten years exile, and being turned a-drift by my father, here am I again, a warm planter, and a widower, most woefully tired of matrimony. But, my dear Belmour, we were both so overjoyed to meet one another yesterday evening, just as I arrived in town, that I did not hear a syllable from you of your love-fit. How, when, and where, did this happen?

Bel. Oh, by the most fortunate accident that ever was—I'll tell thee, Rovewell—I was going one night from the tavern about six weeks ago—I had been there with a parcel of blades, whose only joy is centered in their bottle; and faith, till this accident, I was no better myself——but ever since, I am grown quite a new man.

Rove. Ay, a new man, indeed! Who, in the name of wonder, would take thee, sunk as thou art, into a musing, moping, melancholy lover, for the gay Charles Belmour, whom I knew in the West Indies?

Bel. Poh! that is not to be mentioned. You know my father took me against my will from the university, and consigned me over to the academic discipline of a man of war; so that, to prevent a dejection of spirits, I was obliged to run into the opposite extreme—as you yourself were won't to do.

Rove. Why, yes; I had my moments of reflection, and was glad to dissipate them. You know I always told you there was something extraordinary in my story; and so there is still. I suppose it must be cleared up in a few days now—I am in no hurry about it, though: I must see the town a little this evening, and have my frolic first. But to the point, Belmour—you was going from the tavern, you say?

Bel. Yes, sir, about two in the morning; and I perceived an unusual blaze in the air—I was in a rambling humour, and so resolved to know what it was.

Brisk. I and my master went together, sir.

Bel. Oh, Rovewell! my better stars ordained it to light me on to happiness. By sure attraction led, I came to the very street where a house was on fire; water-engines playing, flames as-

ce nding, all hurry, confusion, and distress! when, on a sudden, the voice of despair, silver sweet, came thrilling down to my very heart. 'Poor, dear, little soul, what can she do!' cried the neighbours. Again she screamed; the fire gathering force, and gaining upon her every instant. Here, madam, said I, leap into my arms, I'll be sure to receive you. And would you think it? down she came—my dear Rovewell, such a girl! I caught her in my arms, you rogue, safe, without harm. The dear naked Venus, just risen from her bed, my boy———her slender waist, Rovewell, the downy smoothness of her whole person, and her limbs, harmonious swelling by nature's softest hand!

Rove. Raptures and paradise! What seraglio in Covent Garden did you carry her to?

Bel. There again, now! Do, prithee, correct your way of thinking: take a quantum sufficit of virtuous love, and purify your ideas. Her lovely bashfulness, her delicate fears, her beauty, heightened and endeared by distress, dispersed my wildest thoughts, and melted me into tenderness and respect.

Rove. But, Belmour, surely she has not the impudence to be modest after you have had possession of her person?——

Bel. My views are honourable, I assure you, sir; but her father is so absurdly positive. The man is distracted about the balance of power, and will give his daughter to none but a politician. When there was an execution in his house, he thought of nothing but the camp at Pyrna; and now he's bankrupt, his head runs upon the ways and means, and schemes for paying off the national debt: the affairs of Europe engross all his attention, while the distresses of his lovely daughter pass unnoticed.

Rove. Ridiculous enough! But why do you mind him! Why don't you go to bed to the wench at once!———Take her into keeping, man.

Bel. How can you talk so affrontingly of her? Have not I told you, though her father is ruined, still she has great expectancies from a rich relation?

Rove. Then, what do you stand watering at the mouth for? If she is to have money enough to pay for her china, her gaming debts, her dogs, and her monkeys, marry her, then, if you needs must be ensnared: be in a fool's paradise for a honey-moon; then, come to yourself, wonder at what you have done, and mix with honest fellows again: Carry her off, I say, and never stand whining for the father's consent.

Bel. Carry her off! I like the scheme—Will you assist me?

Rove. No no; there I beg to be excused.—— Don't you remember what the satyrist says—
'Never marry while there's a halter to be had
'for money, or a bridge to afford a convenient
'leap.'

Bel. Prithee leave fooling.

Rove. I am in serious earnest, I assure you. I'll drink with you, game with you, go into any scheme or frolic with you; but 'ware matrimony! Nay, if you come to the tavern this evening, I'll drink your mistress's health in a bumper; but as to your conjugal scheme, I'll have nothing to do with that business, positively.

Bel. Well, well, I'll take you at your word, and meet you at ten exactly, at the same place we were at last night; then and there I'll let you know what further measures I have concerted.

Rove. 'Till then, farewell; a-propos—do you know that I have seen none of my relations yet?

Bel. Time enough to-morrow.

Rove. Ay, ay, to-morrow will do—Well, your servant.

Bel. Rovewell, yours. [*Exit.*] See the gentleman down stairs—and d'ye hear? come to me in my study, that I may give you a letter to Harriet. And hark'e, sir—be sure you see Harriet herself; and let me have no messages from that officious go-between, her mistress Slipslop of a maid, with her unintelligible jargon of hard words, of which she neither knows the meaning nor pronunciation. [*Exit* BRISK.] I'll write to her this moment, acquaint her with the soft tumult of my desires, and, if possible, make her mine own this very night.

[*Exit repeating.*

'Love first taught letters for same wretch's aid,
Some banished lover, or some captive maid.'

SCENE II.—*The Upholsterer's house.*

Enter HARRIET *and* TERMAGANT.

Ter. Well, but, madam, he has made love to you six weeks successively; he has been as constant in his moors, poor gentleman, as if you had the subversion of 'state to settle upon him—and if he slips through your fingers now, madam, you have nobody to depute it but to yourself:

Har. Lard, Termagant, how you run on! I tell you again and again, my pride was touched, because he seemed to presume on his opulence and my father's distresses.

Ter. La, Miss Harriet, how can you be so paradropsical in your 'pinions?

Har. Well, but you know, though my father's affairs are ruined, I am not in so desperate a way; consider my uncle's fortune is no trifle, and I think that prospect entitles me to give myself a few airs, before I resign my person.

Ter. I grant ye, madam, you have very good pretensions; but then, it's waiting for dead men's shoes: I'll venture to be perjured Mr Bellmour never disclaimed an idear of your father's distress.

Har. Supposing that?

Ter. Suppose, madam—I know it disputably to be so.

Har. Indisputably, I guess you mean; but I'm tired of wrangling with you about words.

Ter. By my troth, you are in the right on't—there's ne'er a she in all Old England (as your father calls it) is mistress of such phisiology, as I am. Incertain I am, as how you does not know nobody that puts their words together with such a curacy as myself. I once lived with a mistus, madam—Mistus! She was a lady—a great brewer's wife—and she wore as fine clothes as any person of quality, let her get up as early as she will—and she used to call me—Termagant, says she—what is the figrification of such a word—and I always told her—I told her the importation of all my words; though I could not help laughing, Miss Harriet, to see so fine a lady such a downright ignoramus.

Har. Well—but pray now, Termagant, would you have me, directly upon being asked the question, throw myself into the arms of a man?

Ter. O' my conscience you did throw yourself into his arms, with scarce a shift on; that's what you did.

Har. Yes; but that was a leap in the dark, when there was no time to think of it.

Ter. Well, it does not signify arguing, I wish we were both warm in bed; you with Mr Belmour, and I with his coxcomb of a man; instead of being manured here with an old crazy fool—axing your pardon, madam, for calling your father so—but he is a fool, and the worst of fools, with his policies—when his house is full of statues of bangcressy.

Har. 'Tis too true, Termagant———yet he's my father still, and I can't help loving him.

Ter. Fiddle faddle—love him! He's an anecdote against love.

Har. Hush! here he comes!———

Ter. No, 'tis your uncle, Feeble; poor gentleman, I pities him, eaten up with infirmaries, to to be taking such pains with a madman.

Enter FEEBLE.

Har. Well, uncle, have you been able to console him?

Feeb. He wants no consolation, child—Lack-a-day—I'm so infirm I can hardly move.—I found him tracing in the map prince Charles Lorraine's passage over the Rhine, and comparing it with Julius Cæsar's.

Ter. An old blockhead!—I've no patience with him, with his fellows coming after him every hour in the day with news. Well now, I wishes there was no such thing as a newspaper in the world, with such a pack of lies, and such a deal of jab-jab every day.

Feeb. Ay, there were three or four shabby fellows with him when I went into his room—I can't get him to think of appearing before the commissioners to-morrow, to disclose his effects; but I'll send my neighbour, counsellor Codicil, to him—Don't be dejected, Harriet; my poor sister, your mother, was a good woman: I love you for her sake, child, and all I am worth shall be yours—But I must be going—I find myself but very ill; good night, Harriet, good night!

[*Exit* FEEBLE.

Har. You'll give me leave to see you to the door, sir. [*Exit* HARRIET.

Ter. O' my conscience, this master of mine within here might have picked up his crumbs as well as Mr Feeble, if he had any idear of his business. I'm sure, if I had not hopes from Mr Feeble, I should not tarry in this house—By my troth, if all who have nothing to say to the 'fairs of the nation would mind their own business, and those who should take care of our 'fairs would mind their business too, I fancy poor Old England (as they call it) would fare the better among them—This old crazy pate within here—playing the fool—when the man is past his grand clytemnester. [*Exit* TERMAGANT.

SCENE III.—*Discovers* QUIDNUNC *at a table, with newspapers, pamphlets, &c. all around him.*

Quid. Six and three is nine—seven and four is eleven, and carry one—let me see, 126 million—199 thousand 328—and all this with about—where, where's the amount of the specie? Here, here—with about 15 million in specie, all this great circulation! good, good—Why then, how are we ruined? how are we ruined? What says the land-tax at 4 shillings in the pound? two million: now where's my new assessment?—here—here—the 5th part of twenty; 5 in 2, I can't, but 5 in 20 [*Pauses.*] right, 4 times—why then, upon my new assessment there's 4 million—how are we ruined?—What says malt, cyder, and mum?—eleven and carry 1, nought and go 2—good, good; malt, hops, cyder, and mum. Then there's the wine-licence; and the gin-act is no bad article—if the people will shoot fire down their throats, why, in a Christian country, they should pay as much as possible for suicide—Salt, good—sugar, very good—Window-lights—good again!—Stamp-duty, that's not so well—it will have a bad effect upon the newspapers, and we shan't have enough of politics—But there's the lottery—where's my new scheme for a lottery? —here it is—Now for the amount of the whole—how are we ruined? 7 and carry nought—nought and carry 1———

Enter TERMAGANT.

Ter. Sir, sir———

Quid. Hold your tongue, you baggage! you'll put me out—Nought and carry 1.

Ter. Counsellor Codicil will be with you presently———

Quid. Prithee be quiet, woman——How are we ruined?

Ter. Ay, I'm confidous as how you may thank yourself for your own ruination.

Quid. Ruin the nation!——hold your tongue, you jade! I'm raising the supplies within the year ——How many did I carry?

Ter. Yes, you've carried your pigs to a fine market.——

Quid. Get out of the room, hussy—you trollop, get out of the room!—

[*Turning her out.*

Enter RAZOR, *with suds on his head, &c.*

Friend Razor, I'm glad to see thee—Well, hast got any news?

Raz. A budget! I left a gentleman half-shaved in my shop over the way; it came into my head of a sudden, so I could not be at ease till I told you.—

Quid. That's kind, that's kind, friend Razor—never mind the gentleman; he can wait.

Raz. Yes, so he can; he can wait.

Quid. Come, now let's hear, what is't?

Raz. I shaved a great man's butler to-day.—

Quid. Did ye?

Raz. I did.

Quid. Aye!

Raz. Very true. [*Both shake their heads.*

Quid. What did de say?

Raz. Nothing.

Quid. Hum—How did he look?

Raz. Full of thought.

Quid. Aye! full of thought—what can that mean?

Raz. It must mean something.

[*Staring at each other.*

Quid. Mayhap somebody may be going out of place?

Raz. Like enough—there's something at the bottom when a great man's butler looks grave; things can't hold out in this manner, Master Quidnunc!—Kingdoms rise and fall!—Luxury will be the ruin of us all; it will indeed!

[*Stares at him.*

Quid. Pray, now, friend Razor, do you find business as current now as before the war?

Raz. No, no; I have not made a wig the Lord knows when; I can't mind it for thinking of my poor country.

Quid. That's generous, friend Razor.

Raz. Yes, I can't gi' my mind to any thing for thinking of my country; and when I was in Bedlam, it was the same? I could think of nothing else in Bedlam, but poor old England, and so they said as how I was incurable for it.

Quid. S'bodikins! they might as well say the same of me.

Raz. So they might—Well, your servant, Mr Quidnunc. I'll go now and shave the rest of the gentleman's face—Poor old England!

[*Sighs and shakes his head. Going.*

Quid. But hark ye, friend Razor, ask the gentleman if he has got any news?

Raz. I will, I will.

Quid. And, d'ye hear, come and tell me, if he has.

Raz. I will, I will—poor old England! [*Going, returns.*]—O, Mr Quidnunc, I want to ask you—pray now—

Enter TERMAGANT.

Ter. Gemini! gemini! How can a man have so little difference for his customers—

Quid. I tell you, Mrs Malapert——

Ter. And I tell you, the gentleman keeps such a bawling yonder—for shame, Mr Razor! you'll be a bankrupper like my master, with such a house full of children as you have, pretty little things—that's what you will.

Raz. I'm a-coming, I'm a-coming, Mrs Termagant—I say, Mr Quidnunc, I can't sleep in my bed for thinking what will come of the protestants, if the papists should get the better in the present war—

Quid. I'll tell you—the geographer of our coffee-house was saying the other day, that there is an huge tract of land about the pole, where the protestants may retire; and that the papists will never be able to beat them thence, if the northern powers hold together, and the Grand Turk make a diversion in their favour.

Raz. [*Laughs.*] That makes me easy——I'm glad the protestants will know where to go, if the papists should get the better. [*Going, returns.*] Oh! Mr Quidnunc, hark ye! India bonds are risen.

Quid. Are they! how much?

Raz. A Jew pedlar said in my shop, as how they are risen three-sixteenths

Quid. Why, then, that makes some amends for the price of corn.

Raz. So it does, so it does——Good-bye, Mr Quidnunc—I'm so glad the poor protestants know where to go; I shall then have a night's rest mayhap. [*Exit* RAZOR, *laughing.*

Quid. I shall never be rightly easy till those careening wharfs at Gibraltar are repaired—

Ter. Fiddle for your dwarfs! impair your ruined fortune, do that.

Quid. If only one ship can heave down at a time, there will be no end of it—and then, why should watering be so tedious there?

Ter. Look where your daughter comes, and yet you'll be ruinating about Give-a-halter——while that poor thing is breaking her heart.

Enter HARRIET.

Quid. It is one comfort, however, they can always have fresh provisions in the Mediterranean.

Har. Dear papa, what's the Mediterranean to people in our situation?

Quid. The Mediterranean, child? Why, if we should lose the Mediterranean, we're all undone.

Har. Dear sir, that's our misfortune—we are undone already.

Quid. No, no—here, here, child—I have raised the supplies within the year.

Ter. I tell you, you're a lunadic man.

Quid. Yes, yes, I'm a lunatic to be sure—— I tell you, Harriet, I have saved a great deal out of my affairs for you—

Har. For Heaven's sake, sir, don't do that; you must give up every thing; my uncle Feeble's lawyer will be here to talk with you about it—

Quid. Poh, poh, I tell you I know what I am about—you shall have my books and pamphlets, and all the manifestoes of the powers at war.

Har. And so make me a politician, sir?

Quid. It would be the pride of my heart to find I had got a politician in petticoats—a female Machiavel! 'Sbodikins, you might then know as much as most people that talk in coffee-houses; and who knows but, in time, you might be a maid of honour, or sweeper of the Mall, or—

Har. Dear sir, don't I see what you have got by politics?

Quid. Psha! my country's of more consequence to me: and let me tell you, you can't think too much of your country in these worst of times; for Mr Monitor has told us, that affairs in the north, and the Protestant interest, begin to grow ticklish.

Ter. And your daughter's affairs are very ticklish, too, I'm sure.

Har. Prithee, Termagant—

Ter. I must speak to him—I know you are in a ticklish situation, ma'am.

Quid. I tell you, Trull—

Ter. But I am convicted it is so; and the posture of my affairs is very ticklish too; and so I imprecate that Mr Belmour would come, and—

Quid. Mr Belmour come! I tell you, Mrs Saucebox, that my daughter shall never be married to a man that has not better notions of the balance of power.

Ter. But what purvision will you make for her now, with your balances?

Quid. There again now! Why, do you think I don't know what I'm about? I'll look in the papers for a match for you, child; there's often good matches advertised in the papers—Evil betide it, evil betide it! I once thought to have struck a great stroke, that would have astonished all Europe; I thought to have married my daughter to Theodore, king of Corsica——

Har. What, and have me perish in a jail, sir?

Quid. 'Sbodikins, my daughter would have had her coronation-day! I should have been allied to a crowned head, and been first lord of the treasury of Corsica?—But come, now, I'll go and talk over the London Evening, till the Gazette comes in; I shan't sleep to-night, unless I see the Gazette.

Enter CODICIL.

Cod. Mr Quidnunc, your servant—The door was open, and I entered upon the premises—I'm just come from the hall.

Quid. 'Sbodikins, this man is now come to keep me at home.

Cod. Upon my word, Miss Harriet's a very pretty young lady; as pretty a young lady as one would desire to have and to hold. Ma'am, your most obedient: I have drawn my friend Feeble's will, in which you have all his goods and chattels, lands, and hereditaments.

Har. I thank you, sir, for the information—

Cod. And I hope soon to draw your marriage-settlement for my friend Mr Belmour.

Har. O lud, sir! not a word of that before my father—I wish you'd try, sir, to get him to think of his affairs.

Cod. Why, yes, I have instructions for that purpose. Mr Quidnunc, I am instructed to expound the law to you.

Quid. What, the law of nations?

Cod. I am instructed, sir, that you're a bankrupt—*Quasi bancus ruptus—banque route faire*—And my instructions say further, that you are summoned to appear before the commissioners to-morrow.

Quid. That may be, sir; but I can't go to-morrow; and so I shall send them word—I am to be to-morrow at Slaughter's coffee-house with a private committee, about business of great consequence to the affairs of Europe.

Cod. Then, sir, if you don't go, I must instruct you that you'll be guilty of a felony; it will be deemed to be done *malo animo*—it is held so in the books—And what says the statute? By the 5th Geo. II. cap. 30. not surrendering, or embezzling, is felony, without benefit of clergy.

Quid. Ay! you tell me news——

Cod. Give me leave, sir—I am instructed to expound the law to you—Felony is thus described in the books: *Felonia*, saith Hotoman, *de verbis feudalibus, significat capitale facinus*, a capital offence.

Quid. You tell me news; you do indeed!

Cod. It was so apprehended by the Goths and the Longobards. And what saith sir Edward Coke? *Fieri debeat felleo animo.*

Quid. You've told me news—I did not know it was felony; but if the Flanders mail should come in while I am there, I shall know nothing at all of it——

Cod. But why should you be uneasy? *cui bono*, Mr Quidnunc, *cui bono?*

Quid. Not uneasy! If the papists should beat the protestants!

Cod. But I tell you, they can get no advantage of us. The laws against the further growth

of popery will secure us; there are provisos in favour of protestant purchasers under papists—10th Geo. I. cap. 4. and 6th Geo. II. cap. 5.

Quid. Ay!

Cod. And besides, popish recusants can't carry arms; so can have no right of conquest, *vi et armis.*

Quid. That's true, that's true; I'm easier in my mind——

Cod. To be sure, what are you uneasy about? The papists can have no claim to Silesia——

Quid. Can't they?

Cod. No, they can set up no claim—If the queen, on her marriage, had put all her lands into Hotchpot, then indeed—and it seemeth, saith Littleton, that this word Hotchpot is in English a pudding——

Quid. You reason very clearly, Mr Codicil, upon the rights of the powers at war; and so now, if you will, I am ready to talk a little of my affairs.

Cod. Nor does the matter rest here; for how can she set up a claim, when she has made a conveyance to the house of Brandenburgh? The law, Mr Quidnunc, is very severe against fraudulent conveyances.

Quid. 'Sbodikins, you have satisfied me——

Cod. Why, therefore, then, if he will levy fines, and suffer a common recovery, he can bequeath it as he likes in *feodum simplex*, provided he takes care to put it in *ses heres.*

Quid. I'm heartily glad of it—So that, with regard to my effects——

Cod. Why, then, suppose she was to bring it to a trial at bar——

Quid. I say, with regard to the full disclosure of my effects——

Cod. What would she get by that? it would go off upon a special pleading: and as to equity—

Quid. Pray, must I now surrender my books and my pamphlets?

Cod. What would equity do for her? Equity can't relieve her; he might keep her at least twenty years before a master to settle the account——

Quid. You have made me easy about the protestants in this war, you have indeed. So that, with regard to my appearing before the commissioners——

Cod. And as to the ban of the empire, he may demur to that: for all tenures by knights-service are abolished; and the statute 12th Char. II. has declared all lands to be held under a common socage.

Quid. Pray now, Mr Codicil, must not my creditors appear to prove their debts?

Cod. Why, therefore, then, if they're held in common socage, I submit it to the court, whether the empire can have any claim to knight's service. They can't call to him for a single man for the wars——*unum hominem ad guerram*—— For what is common socage?——*socagium idem est quod servitium socæ*—The service of the plough.

Quid. I'm ready to attend them—But, pray now, when my certificate is signed—it is of great consequence to me to know this——I say, sir, when my certificate is signed, mayn't I then—Hey? [*Starting up.*] Hey!——What do I hear?

Cod. I apprehend—I humbly conceive, when your certificate is signed——

Quid. Hold your tongue, man—Did not I hear the Gazette?

Newsman. [*Within.*] Great news in the London Gazette!

Quid. Yes, yes, it is—it is the Gazette—— Termagant, run, you jade—[*Turns her out.*]—— Harriet, fly! it is the Gazette— [*Turns her out.*

Cod. The law, in that case, Mr Quidnunc, *prima facie*—

Quid. I can't hear you—I have not time—Termagant, run, make haste— [*Stamps violently.*

Cod. I say, sir, it is held in the books—

Quid. I care for no books; I want the papers— [*Stamping.*

Cod. Throughout all the books—Bo! the man is *non compos;* and his friends, instead of a commission of bankruptcy, should take out a commission of lunacy. [*Exit* COD.

Enter TERMAGANT.

Ter. What do you keep such a bawling for? the newsman says as how the emperor of Mocco is dead.

Quid. The emperor of Morocco?

Ter. Yes, him.

Quid. My poor, dear emperor of Morocco! [*Bursts into tears.*

Ter. Ah, you old Don Quicksett!—Madam, madam—Miss Harriet, go your ways into the next room; there's Mr Belmour's man there; Mr Belmour has sent you a billydore.—

Har. Oh, Termagant, my heart is in an uproar—I don't know what to say—Where is he? let me run to him this instant. [*Exit* HAR.

Quid. The emperor of Morocco had a regard for the balance of Europe—[*Sighs.*]—Well, well; come, come; give me the paper.

Ter. The newsman would not trust, because you're a bankrupper, and so I paid twopence-halfpenny for it.

Quid. Let's see, let's see.

Ter. Give me my money, then. [*Running from him.*

Quid. Give it me this instant, you jade! [*After him.*

Ter. Give me my money, I say! [*From him.*

Quid. I'll teach you, I will, you baggage! [*After her.*

Ter. I won't part with it till I have the money. [*From him.*

Quid. I'll give you no money, hussy! [*After her.*

Ter. Your daughter shall marry Mr Belmour. [*From him.*

Quid. I'll never accede to the treaty. [*After her.*

Ter. Go, you old fool! [*From him.*

Quid. You vile minx, worse than the whore of Babylon! [*After her.*

Ter. There, you old cracked-brained-politic—there's your paper for you! [*Throws it down, and exit.*

Quid. [*Sitting down.*] O Heavens! I'm quite out of breath—A jade, to keep my news from me—What does it say, what does it say?—[*Reads very fast while opening the paper.*]—'Whereas 'a commission of bankrupt is awarded and issued 'forth against Abraham Quidnunc, of the parish 'of St Martins, in the Fields, upholsterer, dealer, 'and chapman, the said bankrupt is hereby required to surrender himself.' Poh! what signifies this stuff? I don't mind myself, when the balance of power is concerned.—However, I shall be read of in the same paper, in the London Gazette, by the powers abroad, together with the pope, and the French king, and the mogul, and all of them—Good, good, very good—Here's a power of news—Let me see—[*Reads.*]—'Letters 'from the vice-admiral, dated Tyger, off Calcut-'ta.'—[*Mutters to himself very eagerly.*]—Odd's heart, those baggages will interrupt me; I hear their tongues a-going, click, clack, clack: I'll run into my closet, and lock myself up.—A vixen! a trollop! to want money from me, when I may have occasion to buy the state of the Sinking Fund, or Faction Detected, or The Barrier Treaty—or—and, besides, how could the jade tell but to-morrow we may have a Gazette Extraordinary? [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Upholsterer's house.*

Enter QUIDNUNC.

Quid. WHERE, where, where is he? Where's Mr Pamphlet?—Mr Pamphlet!—Termagant—Mr——a——a—Termagant, Harriet, Termagant, you vile minx, you saucy—

Enter TERMAGANT.

Ter. Here's a racket, indeed!

Quid. Where's Mr Pamphlet? You baggage, if he's gone——

Ter. Did not I intimidate that he's in the next room?—Why, sure the man's out of his wits!

Quid. Show him in here, then—I would not miss seeing him for the discovery of the north-east passage.

Ter. Go, you old gemini gomini of a politic! [*Exit* TER.

Quid. Show him in, I say; I had rather see him than the whole state of the peace at Utrecht, or the Paris-a-la-main, or the votes, or the minutes, or—[*Here he comes.*]—the best political writer of the age.

Enter PAMPHLET, *in a surtout coat*, &c.

Quid. Mr Pamphlet, I am heartily glad to see you.

Pam. Mr Quidnunc, your servant; I'm come from a place of great importance.

Quid. Look ye there, now!—Well, where, where?

Pam. Are we alone?

Quid. Stay, stay, till I shut the door—Now, now, where do you come from?

Pam. From the court of requests. [*Laying aside his surtout coat.*

Quid. The court of requests! [*Whispers.*] Are they up?

Pam. Hot work.

Quid. Debates arising, may be?

Pam. Yes, and like to sit late.

Quid. What are they upon?

Pam. Can't say.

Quid. What carried you thither?

Pam. I went in hopes of being taken up.

Quid. Look ye there now. [*Shaking his head.*

Pam. I've been aiming at it these three years.

Quid. Indeed! [*Staring at him.*

Pam. Indeed!—Sedition is the only thing an author can live by now—Time has been I could turn a penny by an earthquake, or live upon a jail-distemper, or dine upon a bloody murder!—but now that's all over—nothing will do now but roasting a minister, or telling the people that they are ruined—The people of England are never so happy as when you tell them they are ruined.

Quid. Yes, but they an't ruined—I have a scheme for paying off the national debt.

Pam. Let us see, let us see. [*Puts on his spectacles.*] Well enough! well imagined!—a new thought this!—I must make this my own. [*Aside.*] Silly, futile, absurd, abominable; this will never do—I'll put it in my pocket, and read it over in the morning for you——Now, look you here; I'll show you a scheme. [*Rummaging his pockets.*] No, that's not it; that's my conduct of the ministry, by a country gentleman; I proved the nation undone here: this sold hugely; and here now, here's my answer to it, by a noble lord—this did not move among the trade.

Quid. What, do you write on both sides?

Pam. Yes, both sides; I have two hands, Mr Quidnunc; always impartial, *ambo dexter*. Now, here, here's my dedication to a great man: touched twenty for this; and here, here's my libel upon him——

Quid. What, after being obliged to him?

Pam. Yes, for that reason—It excites curiosity——White-wash and blacking-ball, Mr Quidnunc! *in utrumque paratus*——no thriving without it.

Quid. What have you here in this pocket? [*Prying eagerly.*

Pam. That's my account with Jacob Zorobabel the broker, for writing paragraphs to raise or tumble the stocks, or the price of lottery tickets, according to his purposes.

Quid. Ay! how do you do that?

Pam. As thus—To-day the protestant interest declines, Madras is taken, and England is undone; then, all the long faces in the alley look as dismal as a blank; and so Jacob buys away, and thrives upon our ruin. Then, to-morrow, we are all alive and merry again; Pondicherry's taken; a certain northern potentate will shortly strike a blow to astonish all Europe: and, then, every true-born Englishman is willing to buy a lottery-ticket for twenty or thirty shillings more than its worth; so Jacob sells away, and reaps the fruit of our success.

Quid. What! will the people believe that now?

Pam. Believe it! believe any thing—No swallow like a true-born Englishman's———A man in a quart-bottle, or a victory, 'tis all one to them———they give a gulp—and down it goes—glib, glib———

Quid. Yes; but they an't at the bottom of things.

Pam. No, not they; they dabble a little, but can't dive——

Quid. Pray now, Mr Pamphlet, what do you think of our situation?

Pam. Bad, sir, bad—And how can it be better? the people in power never send to me——never consult me; it must be bad; now, here, here—[*Goes to his loose coat.*] here is a manuscript! this will do the business, a master-piece! I shall be taken up for this———

Quid. Shall ye?

Pam. As sure as a gun, I shall; I know the bookseller's a rogue, and will give me up.

Quid. But pray now, what shall you get by being taken up?

Pam. I'll tell you—[*Whispers.*] in order to make me hold my tongue.

Quid. Ay, but you won't hold your tongue for all that.

Pam. Poh, poh! not a jot of that—abuse them the next day.

Quid. Well, well, I wish you success———But do you hear no news? have you seen the Gazette?

Pam. Yes, I have seen that—Great news, Mr Quidnunc—But hark ye—[*Whispers.*] and kiss hands next week.

Quid. Aye!
Pam. Certain.
Quib. Nothing permanent in this world.
Pam. All is vanity———
Quid. Ups and downs———
Pam. Ins and outs——
Quid. Wheels within wheels——
Pam. No smoke without fire——
Quid. All's well that ends well.
Pam. It will last our time.
Quid. Whoever lives to see it, will know more of the matter.
Pam. Time will tell all.

In deep thought, without looking at each other.

Quid. Ay, we must leave all to the determination of time. Mr Pamphlet, I'm heartily obliged to you for this visit—I love you better than any man in England.

Pam. And, for my part, Mr Quidnunc—I love you better than I do England itself.

Quid. That's kind, that's kind—there's nothing I would not do, Mr Pamphlet, to serve you.

Pam. Mr Quidnunc, I know you are a man of integrity and honour—I know you are—and now since we have opened our hearts, there is a thing, Mr Quidnunc, in which you can serve me—You know, sir, this is the fulness of our hearts—you know you have my note for a trifle; hard dealing with assignees. Now, could not you, to serve a friend———could not you throw that note into the fire?

Quid. Hey! but would that be honest?

Pam. Leave that to me; a refined stroke of policy—Papers have been destroyed in all governments.

Quid. So they have; it shall be done; it will be political; it will, indeed. Pray now, Mr Pamphlet, what do you take to be the true political balance of power?

Pam. What do I take to be the balance of power?

Quid. Ay, the balance of power?

Pam. The balance of power! what do I take to be the balance of power? the balance of power! [*Shuts his eyes.*] what do I take to be the balance of power?

Quid. The balance of power I take to be, when the court of aldermen sits.

Pam. No, no———

Quid. Yes, yes——

Pam. No, no; the balance of power is when the foundations of government and the superstructures are natural.

Quid. How d'ye mean natural?

Pam. Prithee be quiet, man. This is the language—The balance of power is——when superstructures are reduced to proper balances, or when the balances are not reduced to unnatural superstructures.

Quid. Poh, poh! I tell you it is when the fortifications of Dunkirk are demolished.

Pam. But, I tell you, Mr Quidnunc—
Quid. I say, Mr Pamphlet———
Pam. Hear me, Mr Quidnunc———
Quid. Give me leave, Mr Pamphlet——
Pam. I must observe, sir———
Quid. I am convinced, sir———
Pam. That the balance of power———
Quid. That the fortifications of Dunkirk——
Pam. Depends upon the balances and superstructures———
Quid. Constitute the true political equilibrium———
Pam. Nor will I converse with a man—
Quid. And, sir, I never desire to see your face———
Pam. Of such anti-constitutional principles——

Both in a passion.

Quid. Nor the face of any man who is such a Frenchman in his heart, and has such notions of the balance of power.

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter QUIDNUNC.

Ay, I've found him out—such abominable principles! I never desire to converse with any man of his notions——no, never while I live———

Re-enter PAMPHLET.

Pam. Mr Quidnunc, one word with you, if you please.

Quid. Sir, I never desire to see your face——

Pam. My property, Mr Quidnunc—I shan't leave my property in the house of a bankrupt. [*Twisting his handkerchief round his arm.*] A silly, empty, incomprehensible blockhead!

Quid. Blockhead, Mr Pamphlet!

Pam. A blockhead to use me thus, when I have you so much in my power———

Quid. In your power!

Pam. In my power, sir! It's in my power to hang you!

Quid. To hang me!

Pam. Yes, sir, to hang you. [*Drawing on his coat.*] Did not you propose but this moment—did not you desire me to combine and confederate to burn a note, and defraud your creditors?

Quid. I desire it!

Pam. Yes, Mr Quidnunc; but I shall detect you to the world. I'll give your character—You shall have a sixpenny touch next week.

Flebit et insignis tota cantabitur urbe.

[*Exit* PAMPHLET.

Quid. Mercy on me! there's the effect of his anti-constitutional principles! the spirit of his whole party; I never desire to exchange another word with him.

Enter TERMAGANT.

Ter. Here's a pother, indeed! Did you call me?

Quid. No, you trollop, no———
Ter. Will you go to bed?
Quid. No, no, no, no! I tell you, no!

Ter. Better to go to rest, sir. I heard a doctor of physic say, as how, when a man is past his grand crime—what the deuce makes me forgot my word? his grand crime-hysteric—nothing is so good against indiscompositions as rest taken in its prudish natalibus.

Quid. Hold your prating! I'll not go to bed; I'll step to my brother Feeble; I want to have some talk with him, and I'll go to him directly.

[*Exit* QUID.

Ter. Go thy ways for an old Hocus-pocus of a newspaper! You'll have good luck if you find your daughter here when you come back. Mr Belmour will be here in the interim; and if he does not carry her off, why then, I shall think him a mere shilly-shally feller; and, by my troth, I shall think him as bad a politishing as yourself! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Changes to the street.*

Enter QUIDNUNC, *with a dark lanthorn.*

Quid. If the Grand Turk should actually commence open hostility, and the house-bug Tartars make a diversion upon the frontiers, why, then, 'tis my opinion—time will discover to us a great deal more of the matter.

Watch. [*Within.*] Past eleven o'clock, a cloudy night.

Quid. Hey! past eleven o'clock—'Sbodikins, my brother Feeble will be gone to bed; but he shan't sleep till I have some chat with him.—Hark'e, watchman, watchman!

Enter Watchman.

Watch. Call, master?

Quid. Ay, step hither, step hither; have you heard any news?

Watch News, master!

Quid. Ay, about the Prussians, or the Russians?

Watch. Russians, master!

Quid. Yes; or the movements in Pomerania?

Watch. La, master, I know nothing. Poor gentleman! [*Pointing to his head.*] Good night to you, master. Past eleven o'clock.

[*Exit* WATCH.

Quid. That man, now, has a place under the government, and he won't speak. But I am losing time. [*Knocks at the door.*] Hazy weather! [*Looking up.*] The wind is fixt in that quarter, and we shan't have any mails this week to come. Come about, good wind, do, come about.

Enter a Servant-maid.

Maid. La, sir, is it you?
Quid. Is your master at home, child?

Maid. Gone to bed, sir.

Quid. Well, well, I'll step up to him.

Maid. Must not disturb him for the world, sir———

Quid. Business of the utmost importance.

Maid. Pray, consider, sir, my master an't well.

Quid. Prithee be quiet, woman; I must see him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A room in* FEEBLE'S *house.*

Enter FEEBLE, *in his night-gown.*

Fee. I was just stepping into my bed. Bless my heart! what can this man want? I know his voice. I hope no new misfortune brings him at this hour!

Quid. Hold your tongue, you foolish hussy; he'll be glad to see me. Brother Feeble, brother Feeble! [*Within.*

Enter QUIDNUNC.

Quid. Brother Feeble, I give you joy; the nabob's demolished. [*Sings.*]

Britons strike home, revenge, &c.

Feeb. Lack-a-day, Mr Quidnunc, how can you serve me thus?

Quid. Suraja Dowla is no more!

Feeb. Poor man! he's stark-staring mad.

Quid. Our men diverted themselves with killing their bullocks and their camels, till they dislodged the enemy from the octagon, and the counterscarp, and the bung-lo———

Feeb. I'll hear the rest to-morrow morning—Oh! I'm ready to die!

Quid. Odsheart man, be of good cheer—the new nabob, Jaffier Ally Cawn, has acceded to a treaty; and the English Company have got all their rights in the Phiemand and the Hushbulhoorums.

Feeb. But dear heart, Mr Quidnunc, why am I to be disturbed for this?

Quid. We had but two seapoys killed, three chokeys, four gaul-walls, and two zemidars.—[*Sings.*] 'Britons never shall be slaves!'

Feeb. Would not to-morrow morning do as well for this?

Quid. Light up your windows, man; light up your windows. Chandernagore is taken!

Feeb. Well, well, I'm glad of it—Good night. [*Going.*

Quid. Here; here's the Gazette!———

Feeb. Oh! I shall certainly faint! [*Sits down.*

Quid. Ay, ay, sit down, and I'll read it to you. [*Reads.*] Nay, don't run away—I've more news to tell you!—there's an account from Williamsburgh in America—The superintendant of Indian affairs———

Feeb. Dear sir, dear sir— [*Avoiding him.*

Quid. He has settled matters with the Cherokees— [*Following him.*

Feeb. Enough, enough——— [*From him.*

Quid. In the same manner he did before with the Catabaws. [*After him.*

Feeb. Well, well, your servant.——— [*From him.*

Quid. So that the back inhabitants——— [*After him.*

Feeb. I wish you would let me be a quiet inhabitant in my own house———

Quid. So that the back inhabitants will now be secured by the Cherokees and Catabaws———

Feeb. You'd better go home, and think of appearing before the commissioners———

Quid. Go home! no, no; I'll go and talk the matter over at our coffee-house———

Feeb. Do so, do so.

Quid. [*Returning.*] Mr Feeble—I had a dispute about the balance of power—pray now, can you tell———

Feeb. I know nothing of the matter———

Quid. Well, another time will do for that—I have a great deal to say about that—[*Going, returns.*] Right, I had like to have forgot; there's an erratum in the last Gazette———

Feeb. With all my heart———

Quid. Page 3, line 1st, col. 1st and 3d, for *bombs* read *booms.*

Feeb. Read what you will———

Quid. Nay, but that alters the sense, you know—Well, now your servant. If I hear any more news, I'll come and tell you.

Feeb. For Heaven's sake, no more———

Quid. I'll be with you before you're out of your first sleep———

Feeb. Good-night, good-night——— [*Runs off.*

Quid. I forgot to tell you——the emperor of Morocco is dead. [*Bawling after him.*] So——now I've made him happy——I'll go and knock up my friend Razor, and make him happy too ———and then I'll go and see if any body is up at the coffee-houses———and make them all happy there, too. [*Exit* QUIDNUNC.

SCENE V.—*A street. A shabby house, with a barber's pole up, and candles burning on the outside.*

Enter QUIDNUNC, *with a dark lanthorn.*

Quid. Ah, friend Razor!—he has a great respect for a rejoicing night—Who knows but he has heard some more particulars.

RAZOR, *looking out at the window.*

Raz. Anan?

Quid. Friend Razor!

Raz. My Master Quidnunc! I'm rejoicing for

the news—will you partake of a pipe?—I'll open the door.

Quid. Not now, friend Razor.

Raz. I've something to tell you—I'll come down.

Quid. This may be worth staying for—What can he have heard?

Enter RAZOR, *a pipe in his mouth, and a tankard in his hand.*

Raz. Here's to you, Master Quidnunc!

Quid. What have you heard? What have you heard?

Raz. The consumers of oats are to meet next week.

Quid. Those consumers of oats have been meeting any time these ten years to my knowledge, and I never could find what they are about.

Raz. Things an't right, I fear——its enough to put down a body's spirits——— [*Drinks.*

Quid. No, nothing to fear——I can tell you some good news——a certain great potentate has not heard high-mass the Lord knows when.

Raz. That puts a body in spirits again. [*Drinks.*] Here drink, No wooden shoes!

Quid. With all my heart—[*Drinks.*] Good liquor this, Master Razor, of a cold night.

Raz. Yes, I put a quartern of British brandy in my beer—whu!—Do you know what a rebel my wife is?

Quid. A rebel!

Raz. Ay, a rebel—I earned nineteen-pence half-penny to-day, and she wanted to lay out all that great sum upon the children—whu!—but I bought those candles for the good of my country, to rejoice with, as a body may say——a little Virginy for my pipe, and this sup of hot——whu———

Quid. Ay, you're an honest man: and if every body did like you and me, what a nation we should be!———

Raz. Ay, very true—— [*Shakes his head.*

Quid. I can give you the Gazette to read.

Raz. Can you! a thousand thanks—I'll take it home to you when I have done.———

[*Drinks, and staggers.*

Quid. Friend Razor, you begin to be a little in for't.

Raz. Yes, I have a whirligigg of a head—but a body should get drunk sometimes for the good of one's country.

Quid. Well, I shall be at home in half an hour!—Hark'e.

Raz. Anan!

Quid. I have made a rare discovery—Florida will be able to supply Jamaica with peat for their winter's firing. I had it from a deep politician.

Raz. Ay! I am glad the poor people of Jamaica will have Florida peat to burn.———

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*The Upholsterer's house.*

Enter BELMOUR *and* HARRIET.

Har. Mr Belmour, pray, sir——I desire, sir, you'll not follow me from room to room.

Bel. Indulge me but a moment.

Har. No, Mr Belmour, I've seen too much of your temper—I'm touched beyond all enduring at your unmanly treatment.

Bel. Unmanly, madam?

Har. Unmanly, sir! to presume upon the misfortunes of my family, and insult me with the formidable menaces that, 'Truly you have done; 'you'll be no more a slave to me.'—Oh fie, Mr Belmour! I did not think a gentleman capable of it.

Bel. But you won't consider.—

Har. Sir, I would have Mr Belmour understand, that though my father's circumstances are embarrassed, I have still an uncle, who can, and will, place me in a state of affluence; and then sir, your declarations———

Bel. My dearest Harriet, they were but hasty words; let me now entreat you suffer me to convey you hence, far from your father's roof, where we may at length enjoy that happiness, of which we have long cherished the loved idea——What say you, Harriet?

Har. I don't know what to say———my heart's at my lips.——Why don't you take me, then?

Enter TERMAGANT.

Ter. Undone, undone! I'm all over in a flustration—— old Jimini Gomini's coming.

Har. O lud, what is to be done now?

Ter. The devil! what can be done? I have it—don't flustrate yourself—— I'll find some nonsense news for him—away with you both into that room. Quick, quick!

[*Exeunt* BELMOUR *and* HARRIET.

Let me see—have I nothing in my pocket for the old hocus pocus to read? Psha! that's Mr Belmour's letter to Miss Harriet——I enveloped that secret for all pains to purvent me.—Old Politic must not have an idear of that business —Stay, stav; is there ne'er an old trampery newspaper?—this will do—[*Puts it in her pocket.*] Now let the Gazette of a fellow come as soon as he will.

Enter QUIDNUNC.

Quid. Fie upon it!———fie upon it!—all the coffee-houses shut up—Where is my Salmon's gazetteer, and my map of the world?—in this room, I fancy—I won't sleep till I know the geography of all these places. [*Going.*

Ter. Sir. sir, sir!

Quid. What's the matter?

Ter. Here has been Mr———he with the odd name.

Quid. Mr D— that writes the pretty verses upon all public occasions———

Ter. Ay, Mr Reptile; the same. He says as how there are some assays of his in this paper, [*Searches her pockets.*] and he desires you will give your idear of them.

Quid. That I will—let me see!———

Ter. The deuce fetch it! here is something distintangles in my pocket; there it is. [*Gives the paper, and drops the letter.*] Pray amuse it before you go to bed; or had not you better go and read it in bed?

Quid. No, I'll read it here.

Ter. Do so; he'll call in the morning. I'll get him to bed, I warrant me; and then Miss Harriet may elope as fast as she will.

[*Exit* TERMAGANT.

Quid. Hey! this is an old newspaper, I see. What's this? [*Takes up the letter.*] Here may be some news—'To Miss Harriet Quidnunc.'—Let me see! [*Reads.*]

'My dearest Harriet,

'Why will you keep me in a state of suspence? 'I have given you every proof of the sincerest 'constancy and love. Surely then, now that you 'see your father's obstinacy, you may determine 'to consult your own happiness; if you will per- 'mit me to wait on you this evening, I will con- 'vey you to a family, who will take the tenderest 'care of your person, till you resign it to the arms 'of 'Your eternal admirer,

'BELMOUR.'

So, so! here's policy detected——Why Harriet, daughter! Harriet! She has not made her escape, I hope?—So madam—

Enter HARRIET *and* BELMOUR.

H ey, the enemy in our camp!

Har. Mr Belmour is no enemy, sir.

Quid. No! What does he lurk in my house for?

Bel. Sir, my designs are honourable; you see, sir, I am above concealing myself.

Quid. Ay, thanks to Termagant, or I should have been undermined here by you.

Ter. [*Looking in.*] What the devil is here to do now? I am all over in a quandery.

Quid. Now, madam, an't you a false girl—an undutiful child? But I can get intelligence, you see—Termagant is my friend, and if it had not been for her——

Enter TERMAGANT.

Ter. Oh, my stars and garters! here's such a piece of work—What shall I do?—My poor dear Miss Harriet——— [*Cries bitterly.*

Quid. What, is there any more news? What has happened now?

Ter. Oh, madam, madam, forgive me, my dear madam———I did not do it on purpose—I did not; as I hope for mercy, I did not!

Quid. Is the woman crazy?

Ter. I did not intend to give it him; I would have seen him gibbeted first. I found the letter in your bed-chamber; I knew it was the same I delivered to you, and my curiosity did make me peep into it. Says my curiosity, 'Now, Ter- 'magant, you may gratify yourself by finding out 'the contents of that letter, which you have so 'violent an itching for.' My curiosity did say so; and then I own my respect for you did say to me, 'Hussy, how dare you meddle with what 'does not belong to you? Keep your distance, 'and let your mistress's secrets alone.' And then upon that, in comes my curiosity again. 'Read it, I tell you, Termagant; a woman of 'spirit should know every thing.' 'Let it alone, 'you jade,' says my respect, 'it is as much as 'your place is worth.' 'What signification's a 'place with an old bankrupper?' says my curio- sity, 'there's more places than one; and so read 'it, I tell you, Termagant.' I did read it; what could I do? Heaven help me! I did read it; I don't go to deny it; I don't, I don't, I don't!

[*Crying very bitterly.*

Quid. And I have read it, too; don't keep such an uproar, woman!

Ter. And after I had read it, thinks me, 'I'll 'give this to my mistress again, and her geruma- 'nocus of a father shall never see it. And so, as my ill stars would have it, as I was giving him a newspaper, I run my hand into the lion's mouth. [*Crying.*

Bel. What an unlucky jade she has been! [*Aside.*

Har. Well, there's no harm done, Termagant; for I don't want to deceive my father.

Quid. Yes, but there is harm done. [*Knocking.*] Hey, what's all this knocking? Step and see, Termagant.

Ter. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Quid. A waiter from the coffee-house, may- hap, with some news. You shall go to the round- house, friend. [*To* BELMOUR.] I'll carry you there myself; and who knows but I may meet a parliament man in the round-house to tell me some politics?

Enter ROVEWELL.

Rove. But I say I will come in; my friend shan't be murdered amongst you.

Bel. 'Sdeath, Rovewell! what brings you here?

Rove. I have been waiting in a hackney-coach for you these two hours; and split me but I was afraid they had smothered you between two fea- ther-beds!

Enter TERMAGANT.

Ter. More misfortunes! here comes the watch.

Quid. The best news I ever heard!

Enter Watchman.

Here, thieves! robbery! murder! I charge them both; take them directly.

Watch. Stand and deliver in the king's name! seize them; knock them down!

Bel. Don't frighten the lady; here's my sword; I surrender.

Rove. You scoundrels! Stand off, rascals!

Watch. Down with him! down with him!

[*Fight.*

Enter RAZOR, *with the Gazette in his hand.*

Raz. What, a fray at my master Quidnunc's! knock him down! knock him down!

[*Folds up the Gazette, puts himself in a boxing attitude, and fights with the watchmen.*]

Quid. That's right; hold him fast!

[*Watchmen seize* ROVEWELL.

Rove. You have overpowered me, you rascals!

Ter. I believe as sure as any thing, as how he's a highwayman, and as how it was he that robbed the mail.

Quid. What! rob the mail, and stop all the news! Search him, search him! he may have the letters belonging to the mail in his pockets now: Ay, here's one letter, 'To Mr Abraham Quidnunc.' Let's see what it is—'Your dutiful 'son, John Quidnunc.'

Rove. That's my name, and Rovewell was but assumed.

Quid. What, and am I your father?

Raz. [*Looks at him.*] Oh, my dear sir! [*Embraces him, and powders him all over.*] 'tis he sure enough! I remember the mole on his cheek —I shaved his first beard.

Quid. Just returned from the West Indies, I suppose?

Rove. Yes, sir; the owner of a rich plantation.

Quid. What, by studying politics?

Rove. By a rich planter's widow; and I have now fortune enough to make you happy in your old age.

Raz. And I hope I shall shave him again?

Rove. So thou shalt, honest Razor. In the mean time, let me entreat you bestow my sister upon my friend Belmour here.

Quid. He may take her as soon as he pleases; 'twill make an excellent paragraph in the newspapers.

Ter. There, madam, calcine your person to him.

Quid. What are the Spaniards doing in the Bay of Honduras?

Rove. Truce with politics for the present, if you please, sir. We'll think of our own affairs first, before we concern ourselves about the balance of power.

Raz. With all my heart; I'm rare happy!

Come, Mr Quidnunc, now with news ha' done,
Blessed in your wealth, your daughter, and your son;
May discord cease, faction no more be seen:
Be high and low for country, king, and queen.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

GUARDIAN.

BY

GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
HEARTLY, *the Guardian.*	HARRIET, *ward to* HEARTLY.
SIR CHARLES CLACKIT, *his friend.*	LUCY, *servant to* HARRIET.
MR CLACKIT, *nephew to* SIR CHARLES.	
Servant.	

Scene—a country town.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter SIR CHARLES CLACKIT, YOUNG CLACKIT, *and Servant.*

Ser. PLEASE to walk this way, sir.

Sir Cha. Where is your master, friend?

Ser. In his dressing-room, sir.

Young Cla. Let him know, then——

Sir Cha. Prithee, be quiet, Jack; when I am in company, let me direct. 'Tis proper and decent.

Young Cla. I am dumb, sir.

Sir Cha. Tell Mr Heartly, his friend and neighbour, Sir Charles Clackit, would say three words to him.

Ser. I shall, sir. [*Exit* SER.

Sir Cha. Now, nephew, consider once again, before I open the matter to my neighbour Heartly, what I am going to undertake for you.—Why don't you speak!

Young Cla. Is it proper and decent, uncle?

Sir Cha. Psha! don't be a fool, but answer me—Don't you flatter yourself!—What assurance have you that this young lady, my friend's ward, has a liking to you? The young fellows of this age are all coxcombs; and, I am afraid, you are no exception to this general rule.

Young Cla. Thank you, uncle; but, may I this instant be struck old and peevish, if I would put you upon a false scent to expose you, for all the fine women in Christendom. I assure you again and again, and you may take my word, uncle, that Miss Harriet has no kind of aversion to your nephew and most humble servant.

Sir Cha. Ay, ay, vanity, vanity! but I never take a young fellow's word about women; they'll lie as fast, and with as little conscience, as the Brussels Gazette. Produce your proofs.

Young Cla. Can't your eyes see them, uncle, without urging me to the indelicacy of repeating them?

Sir Cha. Why, I see nothing but a fool's head and a fool's coat, supported by a pair of most unpromising legs. Have you no better proofs?

Young Cla. Yes, I have, my good infidel uncle, half a hundred.

Sir Cha. Out with them, then.

Young Cla. First, then—Whenever I see her, she never looks at me:—That's a sign of love.—Whenever I speak to her, she never answers me: Another sign of love.—And whenever I speak to any body else, she seems to be perfectly easy:—That's a certain sign of love.

Sir Cha. The devil it is!

Young Cla. When I am with her she is always grave; and the moment I get up to leave her, then the poor thing begins:—'Why will you leave 'me, Mr Clackit? can't you sacrifice a few mo-'ments to my bashfulness?—Stay, you agreeable 'runaway, stay; I shall soon overcome the fears 'your presence gives me.'—I could say more—But a man of honour, uncle——

Sir Cha. What, and has she said all these things to you?

Young Cla. O yes, and ten times more—with her eyes.

Sir Cha. With her eyes?—Eyes are very equivocal, Jack.—However, if the young lady has any liking to you, Mr Heartly is too much a man of the world, and too much my friend, to oppose the match; so do you walk into the garden, and I will open the matter to him.

Young Cla. Is there any objection to my staying, uncle? The business will be soon ended—you will propose the match; he will give his consent, I shall give mine; miss is sent for, and *l'affair est fait.* [*Snapping his finger.*

Sir Cha. And so you think that a young beautiful heiress, with forty thousand pounds, is to be had with a scrap of French, and a snap of your finger? Prithee get away, and don't provoke me.

Young Cla. Nay, but my dear uncle—

Sir Cha. Nay, but my impertinent nephew, either retire, or I'll throw up the game.

[*Putting him out.*

Young Cla. Well, well, I am gone, uncle.—When you come to the point, I shall be ready to make my appearance.—*Bon voyage!* [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. The devil's in these young fellows, I think!——We send them abroad to cure their sheepishness, and they get above proof the other way.

Enter MR HEARTLY.

Good-morrow to you, neighbour.

Heart. And to you, sir Charles; I am glad to see you so strong and healthy.

Sir Cha. I can return you the compliment, my friend: Without flattery, you don't look more than thirty-five; and, between ourselves, you are on the wrong side of forty—But mum for that.

Heart. Ease and tranquillity keep me as you see.

Sir Cha. Why don't you marry, neighbour? A good wife would do well for you.

Heart. For me! You are pleased to be merry, sir Charles.

Sir Cha. No, faith, I am serious; and had I a daughter to recommend to you, you should say me nay more than once, I assure you, neighbour Heartly, before I would quit you.

Heart. I am much obliged to you.

Sir Cha. But, indeed, you are a little too much of the philosopher, to think of being troubled with women and their concerns.

Heart. I beg your pardon, sir Charles—Though there are many who call themselves philosophers, that live single, and, perhaps, are in the right of it, yet, I cannot think that marriage is at all inconsistent with true philosophy.—A wise man will resolve to live like the rest of the world, with this only difference, that he is neither a slave to passions nor events. It is not because I have a little philosophy, but because I am on the wrong side of forty, sir Charles, that I desire to be excused.

Sir Cha. As you please, sir; and, now, to my business.—You have no objection, I suppose, to tie up your ward, Miss Harriet, though you have slipped the collar yourself? ha, ha, ha!

Heart. Quite the contrary, sir; I have taken her some time from the boarding-school, and brought her home, in order to dispose of her worthily, with her own inclination.

Sir Cha. Her father, I have heard you say, recommended that particular care to you, when she had reached a certain age.

Heart. He did so; and I am the more desirous to obey him scrupulously in this circumstance, as she will be a most valuable acquisition to the person who shall gain her; for, not to mention her fortune, which is the least consideration, her sentiments are worthy her birth; she is gentle, modest, and obliging. In a word, my friend, I never saw youth more amiable or discreet; but, perhaps, I am a little partial to her.

Sir Cha. No, no; she is a delicious creature, every body says so. But, I believe, neighbour, something has happened that you little think of.

Heart. What! pray, sir Charles?

Sir Cha. My nephew, Mr Heartly—

Enter YOUNG CLACKIT.

Young Cla. Here I am, at your service, sir—my uncle is a little unhappy in his manner; but, I'll clear the matter in a moment—Miss Harriet, sir—your ward—

Sir Cha. Get away, you puppy!

Young Cla. Miss Harriet, sir, your ward—a most accomplished young lady, to be sure—

Sir Cha. Thou art a most accomplished coxcomb, to be sure!

Heart. Pray, sir Charles, let the young gentleman speak.

Young Cla. You'll excuse me, Mr Heartly—My uncle does not set up for an orator—little confused, or so, sir—You see me what I am—But I ought to ask pardon for the young lady and myself.—We are young, sir—I must confess we

were wrong to conceal it from you—But my uncle, I see, is pleased to be angry; and, therefore, I shall say no more at present.

Sir Cha. If you don't leave the room this moment, and stay in the garden till I call you—

Young Cla. I am sorry I have displeased you—I did not think it was *mal-a-propos;* but you must have your way, uncle—You command—I submit—Mr Heartly, yours.

[*Exit* YOUNG CLACKIT.

Sir Cha. Puppy! [*Aside.*]. My nephew's a little unthinking, Mr Heartly, as you see; and, therefore, I have been a little cautious how I have proceeded in this affair: But, indeed, he has in a manner persuaded me, that your ward and he are not ill together.

Heart. Indeed! this is the first notice I have had of it, and I cannot conceive why Miss Harriet should conceal it from me; for I have often assured her, that I would never oppose her inclination, though I might endeavour to direct it.

Sir Cha. 'Tis human nature, neighbour. We are so ashamed of our first passion, that we would willingly hide it from ourselves—But will you mention my nephew to her?

Heart. I must beg your pardon, sir Charles. The name of the gentleman whom she chooses, must first come from herself. My advice or importunity shall never influence her: If guardians would be less rigorous, young people would be more reasonable; and I am so unfashionable to think, that happiness in marriage can't be bought too dear—I am still on the wrong side of forty, sir Charles.

Sir Cha. No, no; you are right, neighbour.—But here she is. Don't alarm her young heart too much, I beg of you. Upon my word, she is a sweet morsel!

Enter MISS HARRIET *and* LUCY.

Miss Har. He is with company—I'll speak to him another time.

[*Retiring.*

Lucy. Young, handsome, and afraid of being seen! You are very particular, miss.

Heart. Miss Harriet, you must not go.—[HARRIET *returns.*]—Sir Charles, give me leave to introduce you to this young lady. You know, I suppose, the reason of this gentleman's visit to me? [*To* HARRIET.

Miss Har. Sir! [*Confused.*

Heart. You may trust me, my dear. Don't be disturbed; I shall not reproach you with any thing but keeping your wishes a secret from me so long.

Miss Har. Upon my word, sir—Lucy!

Lucy. Well, and Lucy! I'll lay my life 'tis a treaty of marriage! Is that such a dreadful thing? Oh, for shame, madam! Young ladies of fashion are not frightened at such things, now-a-days.

Heart. [*To* SIR CHA.]—We have gone too far, sir Charles. We must excuse her delicacy, and give her time to recover: I had better talk with her alone; we will leave her now. Be persuaded, that no endeavours shall be wanting, on my part, to bring this affair to a happy and speedy conclusion.

Sir Cha. I shall be obliged to you, Mr Heartly. Young lady, your servant. What grace and modesty! She is a most engaging creature, and I shall be proud to make her one of my family.

Heart. You do us honour, sir Charles.

[*Exeunt* SIR CHA. *and* HEART.

Lucy. Indeed, Miss Harriet, you are very particular; you was tired of the boarding-school, and yet seem to have no inclination to be married. What can be the meaning of all this? that smirking old gentleman is uncle to Mr Clackit; and, my life for it, he has made some proposals to your guardian.

Miss Har. Prithee, don't plague me about Mr Clackit.

Lucy. But why not, miss? though he is a little fantastical, loves to hear himself talk, and is somewhat self-sufficient; you must consider he is young, has been abroad, and keeps good company: the trade will soon be at an end, if young ladies and gentlemen grow over nice and exceptious.

Miss Har. But if I can find one without these faults, I may surely please myself.

Lucy. Without these faults! and is he young, miss?

Miss Har. He is sensible, modest, polite, affable, and generous; and charms from the natural impulses of his own heart, as much as others disgust by their senseless airs, and insolent affectation.

Lucy. Upon my word! But why have you kept this secret so long? Your guardian is kind to you beyond conception. What difficulties can you have to overcome?

Miss Har. Why, the difficulty of declaring my sentiments.

Lucy. Leave that to me, miss. But your spark, with all his accomplishments, must have very little penetration, not to have discovered his good fortune in your eyes.

Miss Har. I take care that my eyes don't tell too much; and he has too much delicacy to interpret looks to his advantage. Besides, he would certainly disapprove my passion; and if I should ever make the declaration, and meet with a denial, I should absolutely die with shame.

Lucy. I'll insure your life for a silver thimble. But what can possibly hinder your coming together?

Miss Har. His excess of merit.

Lucy. His excess of a fiddlestick! But come, I'll put you in the way: You shall trust me with the secret; I'll intrust it again to half a dozen friends; they shall intrust it to half a dozen

more, by which means, it will travel half the town over in a week's time: the gentleman will certainly hear of it; and then, if he is not at your feet in the fetching of a sigh, I'll give up all my perquisites at your wedding. What is his name, miss?

Miss Har. I cannot tell you his name—indeed I cannot; I am afraid of being thought too singular. But why should I be ashamed of my passion? Is the impression, which a virtuous character makes upon our hearts, such a weakness, that it may not be excused?

Lucy. By my faith, miss, I can't understand you: you are afraid of being thought singular, and you really are so; I would sooner renounce all the passions in the universe, than have one in my bosom beating and fluttering itself to pieces. Come, come, miss, open the window, and let the poor devil out.

Enter HEARTLY.

Heart. Leave us, Lucy.

Lucy. There's something going forward: 'tis very hard I can't be of the party.

[*Exit* LUCY.

Heart. She certainly thinks, from the character of the young man, that I shall disapprove of her choice. [*Aside.*

Miss Har. What can I possibly say to him? I am as much ashamed to make the declaration, as he would be to understand it. [*Aside.*

Heart. Don't imagine, my dear, that I would know more of your thoughts than you desire I should; but the tender care which I have ever shewn, and the sincere friendship which I shall always have for you, give me a sort of right to enquire into every thing that concerns you. Some friends have spoken to me in particular. But that is not all. I have lately found you thoughtful, absent, and disturbed. Be plain with me—Has not somebody been happy enough to please you?

Miss Har. I cannot deny it, sir: yes: somebody, indeed, has pleased me—but I must intreat you not to give credit to any idle stories, or inquire farther into the particulars of my inclination; for I cannot possibly have resolution enough to say more to you.

Heart. But have you made a choice, my dear?

Miss Har. I have, in my own mind, sir; and 'tis impossible to make a better—reason, honour, every thing must approve it.

Heart. And how long have you conceived this passion?

Miss Har. Ever since I left the country—to live with you. [*Sighs.*

Heart. I see your confusion, my dear, and will relieve you from it immediately—I am informed of the whole——

Miss Har. Sir!

Heart. Don't be uneasy; for I can with pleasure assure you, that your passion is returned with equal tenderness.

Miss Har. If you are not deceived, I cannot be more happy.

Heart. I think I am not deceived. But, after the declaration you have made, and the assurances which I have given you, why will you conceal it any longer? Have I not deserved a little more confidence from you?

Miss Har. You have, indeed, deserved it, and should certainly have it, were I not well assured that you would oppose my inclinations.

Heart. I oppose them! Am I, then, so unkind to you, my dear? Can you in the least doubt of my affection for you? I promise you that I have no will but yours.

Miss Har. Since you desire it, then, I will endeavour to explain myself.

Heart. I am all attention—speak, my dear.

Miss Har. And if I do, I feel I shall never be able to speak to you again.

Heart. How can that be, when I shall agree with you in every thing?

Miss Har. Indeed you won't: pray let me retire to my own chamber—I am not well, sir.

Heart. I see your delicacy is hurt, my dear: but let me intreat you once more to confide in me. Tell me his name, and the next moment I will go to him, and assure him, that my consent shall confirm both your happiness.

Miss Har. You will easily find him: And when you have, pray tell him how improper it is for a young woman to speak first: Persuade him to spare my blushes, and to release me from so terrible a situation. I shall leave him with you—and hope that this declaration will make it impossible for you to mistake me any longer.

[HARRIET *is going, but, upon seeing* YOUNG CLACKIT, *remains upon the stage.*

Heart. Are we not alone? What can this mean? [*Aside.*

Young Cla. A-propos, faith! here they are together!

Heart. I did not see him; but now the riddle's explained. [*Aside.*

Miss Har. What can he want now?—This is the most spiteful interruption! [*Aside.*

Young Cla. By your leave, Mr Heartly—[*Crosses him to go to* HAR.]—Have I caught you at last, my divine Harriet! Well, Mr Heartly, *sans facon*—But what's the matter? ho! Things look a little gloomy here: One mutters to himself, and gives me no answer; and the other turns the head, and winks at me. How the devil am I to interpret all this?

Miss Har. I wink at you, sir! Did I, sir?

Young Cla. Yes, you, my angel—But mum—Mr Heartly, for Heaven's sake, what is all this? Speak, I conjure you, is it life or death with me?

Miss Har. What a dreadful situation I am in!

Young Cla. Hope for the best; I'll bring matters about, I warrant you.

Heart. You have both of you great reason to be satisfied——Nothing shall oppose your happiness.

Young Cla. Bravo, Mr Heartly!

Heart. Miss Harriet's will is a law to me; and for you, sir—the friendship which I have ever professed for your uncle, is too sincere not to exert some of it upon this occasion.

Miss Har. I shall die with confusion! [*Aside.*

Young Cla. I am alive again. Dear Mr Heartly, thou art a most adorable creature! What a happiness it is to have to do with a man of sense, who has no foolish prejudices, and can see when a young fellow has something tolerable about him!

Heart. Sir, not to flatter you, I must declare, that it is from a knowledge of your friends and family, that I have hopes of seeing you and this young lady happy. I will go directly to your uncle, and assure him that every thing goes on to our wishes. [*Going.*

Miss Har. Mr Heartly—Pray, sir!

Heart. Poor Miss Harriet, I see your distress, and am sorry for it; but it must be got over, and the sooner the better. Mr Clackit, my dear, will be glad of an opportunity to entertain you, for the little time I shall be absent. Poor Miss Harriet! [*Smiling.*

[*Exit* HEART.

Young Cla. *Allez, allez, monsieur!* I'll answer for that. Well, madam, I think every thing succeeds to our wishes. Be sincere, my adorable!—Don't you think yourself a very happy young lady?

Miss Har. I shall be most particularly obliged to you, sir, if you would inform me what is the meaning of all this?

Young Cla. Inform you, miss! the matter, I believe, is pretty clear: our friends have understanding——we have affections——and a marriage follows, of course.

Miss Har. Marriage, sir! Pray, what relation, or particular connection, is there between you and me, sir?

Young Cla. I may be deceived, faith; but upon my honour, I always supposed that there was a little smattering of inclination between us.

Miss Har. And have you spoke to my guardian upon this supposition, sir?

Young Cla. And are you angry at it? I believe not.—[*Smiling.*]—Come, come; I believe not. 'Tis delicate in you to be upon the reserve.

Miss Har. Indeed, sir, this behaviour of yours is most extraordinary!

Young Cla. Come, come, my dear, don't carry this jest too far; *è troppo troppo mia Carissima*——what the devil, when every thing is agreed upon, and uncles and guardians, and such folks, have given their consent, why continue the hypocrisy?

Miss Har. They may have consented for you; but I am mistress of my affections, and will never dispose of them by proxy.

Young Cla. Upon my soul, this is very droll! what, has not your guardian been here this moment, and expressed all imaginable pleasure at our intended union?

Miss Har. He is in an error, sir: and had I not been too much astonished at your behaviour, I had undeceived him long before now.

Young Cla. [*Humming a tune.*]——But, pray miss, to return to business——What can be your intention in raising all this confusion in the family, and opposing your own inclinations?

Miss Har. Opposing my own inclinations, sir!

Young Cla. Ay, opposing your own inclinations, madam. Do you know, child, if you carry on this farce any longer, I shall begin to be a little angry?

Miss Har. I would wish it, sir; for, be assured, that I never in my life had the least thought about you.

Young Cla. Words, words, words——

Miss Har. 'Tis most sincerely and literally true.

Young Cla. Come, come; I know what I know—

Miss Har. Don't make yourself ridiculous, Mr Clackit.

Young Cla. Don't make yourself miserable, Miss Harriet.

Miss Har. I am only so when you persist to torment me.

Young Cla. [*Smiling.*]—And you really believe that you don't love me?

Miss Har. Positively not.

Young Cla. [*Conceitedly.*]—And you are very sure, now, that you hate me?

Miss Har. Oh! most cordially.

Young Cla. Poor young lady! I do pity you, from my soul.

Miss Har. Then why won't you leave me?

Young Cla. 'She never told her love,
'But let concealment, like a worm i' th' bud,
'Feed on her damask cheek.'

Take warning, miss, when you once begin to pine in thought, 'tis all over with you; and be assured, since you are obstinately bent to give yourself airs, that, if you once suffer me to leave this house in a pet——do you mind me? not all your sighing, whining, fits, vapours, and hysterics, shall ever move me to take the least compassion on you——*Coute qui coute.*

Enter HEARTLY *and* SIR CHARLES.

Sir Cha. I am overjoyed to hear it:—There they are, the pretty doves! That is the age, neighbour Heartly, for happiness and pleasure!

Heart, I am willing, you see, to lose no time; which may convince you, sir Charles, how proud I am of this alliance in our families.

Sir Cha. The thought of it rejoices me!——Gad, I will send for the fiddles, and take a dance myself, and a fig for the gout and rheumatism.——But hold, hold!——the lovers, methinks, are a little out of humour with each other—What is the matter, Jack? Not pouting, sure, before your time?

Young Cla. A trifle, sir——the lady will tell you—— [*Hums a tune.*

Heart. You seem to be troubled, Harriet?—What can this mean?

Miss Har. You have been in an error, sir, about me.—I did not undeceive you, because I could not imagine that the consequences could have been so serious and so sudden:—But I am now forced to tell you, that you have misunderstood me—that you have distressed me——

Heart. How, my dear?

Sir Cha. What do you say, Miss?

Young Cla. Mademoiselle is pleased to be out of humour: but I can't blame her; for, upon my honour, I think a little coquettry becomes her.

Sir Cha. Ay, ay, ay,—Oh, ho!—Is that all? These little squalls seldom overset the lover's boat, but drive it faster to port—Ay, ay, ay!——

Heart. Don't be uneasy, my dear, that you have declared your passion.—Be consistent now, lest you should be thought capricious.

Young Cla. Talk to her a little, Mr Heartly; she is a fine lady, and has many virtues; but she does not know the world.

Sir Cha. Come, come; you must be friends again, my children.

Miss Har. I beg you leave me alone, sir.

Heart. For Heaven's sake, Miss Harriet, explain this riddle to me!

Miss Har. I cannot, sir—I have discovered the weakness of my heart, I have discovered it to you, sir.—But your unkind interpretations, and reproachful looks convince me, that I have already said but too much.— [*Exit* HARRIET.

[HEARTLY *muses.*

Sir Cha. Well, but hark'e, nephew—This is going a little too far.——What have you done to her?

Heart. I never saw her so much moved before!

Young Cla. Upon my soul, gentlemen, I am as much surprised at it as you can be:———The little *brouillerie* between us, arose upon her persisting that there was no passion, no penchant between us.

Sir Cha. I'll tell you what, Jack———there is a certain kind of impudence about you, that I don't approve of; and, were I a young girl, those coxcomical airs of yours would surfeit me.

Young Cla. But as the young ladies are not quite so squeamish as you, uncle, I fancy they will choose me as I am. Ha, ha! But what can the lady object to? I have offered to marry her; is not that a proof sufficient that I like her? A young fellow must have some affection that will go to such lengths to indulge it. Ha, ha!

Sir Cha. Why, really, friend Heartly, I don't see how a young man can well do more, or a lady desire more. What say you, neighbour?

Heart. Upon my word, I am puzzled about it. My thoughts upon the matter are so various, and so confused——every thing I see and hear is so contradictory—is so—She certainly cannot like any body else?

Young Cla. No, no; I'll answer for that.

Heart. Or she may be fearful, then, that your passion for her is not sincere; or, like other young men of the times, you may grow careless upon marriage, and neglect her.

Young Cla. Ha! egad, you have hit it! nothing but a little natural delicate sensibility—

[*Hums a tune.*

Heart. If so, perhaps the violence of her reproaches may proceed from the lukewarmness of your professions.

Young Cla. Je vous demande pardon—I have sworn to her a hundred and a hundred times, that she should be the happiest of her sex. But there is nothing surprising in all this; it is the misery of an overfond heart, to be always doubtful of its happiness.

Heart. And if she marries thee, I fear that she'll be kept in a state of doubt as long as she lives. [*Half aside.*

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Pray, gentlemen, what is the matter among you? And which of you has affronted my mistress? She is in a most prodigious taking yonder, and she vows to return into the country again—I can get nothing but sighs from her.

Young Cla. Poor thing!

Lucy. Poor thing! The devil take this love, I say!——There's more rout about it than 'tis worth.

Young Cla. I beg your pardon for that, Mrs Abigail.

Heart. I must inquire farther into this; her behaviour is too particular for me not to be disturbed at it.

Lucy. She desires, with the leave of these gentlemen, that, when she has recovered herself, she may talk with you alone, sir.

[*To* HEART.

Heart. I shall with pleasure attend her.

[*Exit* LUCY.

Young Cla. Divin Bacchus, &c. La, la, la!

[*Sings.*

Sir Cha. I would give, old as I am, a leg or an arm, to be beloved by that sweet creature as you are, Jack!

Young Cla. And throw your gout and rheumatism into the bargain, uncle! Ha, ha! *Divin Bacchus, &c.* La, la, la, &c. [*Sings.*

Sir Cha. What the plague are you quavering at! Thou hast no more feeling for thy happiness than my stick, here.

Young Cla. I beg your pardon for that, my dear uncle.

[*Takes out a pocket looking-glass.*

Sir Cha. I wonder what the devil is come to the young fellows of this age, neighbour Heartly? Why, a fine woman has no effect upon them ——Is there no method to make them less fond of themselves, and more mindful of the ladies?

Heart. I know but of one, sir Charles.

Sir Cha. Ay; what's that?

Heart. Why, to break all the looking-glasses in the kingdom.

[*Pointing to* YOUNG CLA.

Sir Cha. Ay, ay; they are such fops, so taken up with themselves! Zounds, when I was young, and in love——

Young Cla. You were a prodigious fine sight, to be sure!

Heart. Look'e, Mr Clackit, if Miss Harriet's affections declare for you, she must not be treated with neglect or disdain—Nor could I bear it, sir. Any man must be proud of her partiality to him; and he must be fashionably insensible, indeed, who would not make it his darling care to defend, from every inquietude, the most delicate and tender of her sex.

Sir Cha. Most nobly and warmly said, Mr Heartly! Go to her, nephew, directly. Throw yourself at her feet, and swear how much her beauty and virtue have captivated you, and don't let her go till you have set her dear little heart at rest.

Young Cla. I must desire to be excused.—Would you have me say the same thing over and over again? I can't do it, positively. It is my turn to be piqued, now.

Sir Cha. Damn your conceit, Jack! I can bear it no longer.

Heart. I am very sorry to find that any young lady, so near and dear to me, should bestow her heart where there is so little prospect of its being valued as it ought. However, I shall not oppose my authority to her inclinations; and so—Who waits there?

Enter Servant.

Let the young lady know that I shall attend her commands in the library.—[*Exit servant.*]—Will you excuse me, gentlemen?

Sir Cha. Ay, ay; we'll leave you to yourselves; and pray convince her, that I and my nephew are, most sincerely, her very humble servants.

Young Cla. O yes; you may depend upon me.

Heart. A very slender dependence, truly!

[*Aside. Exit.*

Young Cla. We'll be with you again, to know what your tête-a-tête produces; and, in the mean time, I am hers—and yours—adieu—Come, uncle. Fal, lal, la, la!

Sir Cha. I could knock him down with pleasure. [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter HEARTLY, *speaking to a Servant.*

Heart. TELL Miss Harriet that I am here. If she is indisposed, I will wait upon her in her own room. [*Exit Servant.*] However mysterious her conduct appears to me, yet still it is to be decyphered. This young gentleman has certainly touched her. There are some objections to him, and among so many young men of fashion that fall in her way, she certainly might have made a better choice. She has an understanding to be sensible of this: and, if I am not mistaken, it is a struggle between her reason and her passion that occasions all this confusion. But here she is.

Enter MISS HARRIET.

Miss Har. I hope you are not angry, sir, that I left you so abruptly without making any apology?

Heart. I am angry that you think an apology necessary. The matter we were upon was of such a delicate nature, that I was more pleased with your confusion, than I should have been with your excuses.———You'll pardon me, my dear.

Miss Har. I have reflected, that the person for whom I have conceived a most tender regard, may, from the wisest motives, doubt of my passion; and, therefore, I would endeavour to answer all his objections, and convince him how deserving he is of my highest esteem.

Heart. I have not yet apprehended what kind of dispute could arise between you and Mr Clackit: I would advise you both to come to a reconciliation as soon as possible. The law of nature is an imperious one, and cannot, like those of our country, be easily evaded; and though reason may suggest some disagreeable reflections, yet when the stroke is to be given, we must submit to it.

Miss Har. He still continues in his error, and I cannot undeceive him. [*Aside.*

Heart. Shall I take the liberty of telling you, my dear. [*Taking her hand.*] You tremble, Harriet! What is the matter with you?

Miss Har. Nothing, sir. Pray, go on.

Heart. I guess whence proceeds all your uneasiness. You fear that the world will not be so readily convinced of this young gentleman's merit as you are: and, indeed, I could wish him more deserving of you; but your regard for him gives him a merit he otherwise would have wanted, and almost makes me blind to his failings.

Miss Har. And would you advise me, sir, to make choice of this gentleman?

Heart. I would advise you, as I always have done, to consult your own heart upon such an occasion.

Miss Har. If that is your advice, I will most religiously follow it; and, for the last time, I am resolved to discover my real sentiments; but, as a confession of this kind will not become me, I have been thinking of some innocent stratagem to spare my blushes, and in part to relieve me from the shame of a declaration. Might I be permitted to write to him?——

Heart. I think you may, my dear, without the least offence to your delicacy! And, indeed, you ought to explain yourself; your late misunderstanding makes it absolutely necessary.

Miss Har. Will you be kind enough to assist me? Will you write for me, sir?

Heart. Oh, most willingly! And as I am made a party, it will remove all objections.

Miss Har. I will dictate to you in the best manner I am able. [*Sighing.*

Heart. And here is pen, ink, and paper, to obey your commands. [*Draws the table.*

Miss Har. Lord, how my heart beats! I fear I cannot go through it. [*Aside.*

Heart. Now, my dear, I am ready. Don't be disturbed. He is certainly a man of family; and though he has some little faults, time, and your virtues, will correct them. Come, what shall I write? [*Preparing to write.*

Miss Har. Pray, give me a moment's thought. 'Tis a terrible task, Mr Heartly.

Heart. I know it is. Don't hurry yourself: I shall wait with patience. Come, Miss Harriet————

Miss Har. [*Dictating.*] It is in vain for me 'to conceal, from one of your understanding, the 'secrets of my heart.

Heart. 'The secrets of my heart.'

[*Writing.*

Miss Har. 'Though your humility and modes-'ty will not suffer it to perceive it.'

Heart. Do you think, my dear, that he is much troubled with those qualities?

Miss Har. Pray indulge me, sir.

Heart. I beg your pardon—'Your humility 'and modesty will not suffer you to perceive it.' [*Writes.*] So.

Miss Har. 'Every thing tells you, that it is 'you that I love.'

Heart. Very well. [*Writes.*

Miss Har. Yes: you that I love; do you understand me?

Heart. O, yes, yes! I understand you—that it is you that I love. This is very plain, my dear.

Miss Har. I would have it so. 'And though 'I am already bound in gratitude to you'————

Heart. In gratitude to Mr Clackit?

Miss Har. Pray, write, sir.

Heart. Well—'In gratitude to you. [*Writes.*] I must write what she would have me.

[*Aside.*

Miss Har. 'Yet my passion is a most disin-'terested one.'————

Heart. 'Most disinterested one.' [*Writes.*

Miss Har. 'And to convince you, that you owe much more to my affections'————

Heart. And, then?

Miss Har. 'I could wish that I had not ex-'perienced'————

Heart. Stay, stay: 'Had not experienced'—

[*Writes.*

Miss Har. 'Your tender care of me in my 'infancy'————

Heart. [*Disturbed.*] What did you say? Did I hear right, or am I in a dream! [*Aside.*

Miss Har. Why have I declared myself? He'll hate me for my folly.

[*Aside.*

Heart. Harriet!

Miss Har. Sir!

Heart. To whom do you write this letter?

Miss Har. To——to——Mr Clackit———— is it not?

Heart. You must not mention then the care of your infancy; it would be ridiculous.

Miss Har. It would indeed; I own it; it is improper.

Heart. What, did it escape you in your confusion?

Miss Har. It did, indeed.

Heart. What must I put in its place?

Miss Har. Indeed, I don't know. I have said more than enough to make myself understood.

Heart. Then, I'll only finish your letter with the usual compliment, and send it away.

Miss Har. Yes; send it away; if you think I ought to send it.

Heart. [*Troubled.*] Ought to send it! Who's there?

Enter a Servant.

Carry this letter.

[*An action escapes from* HARRIET, *as if to hinder the sending the letter.*]

Is it not for Mr Clackit?

Miss Har. [*Peevishly.*] Who can it be for?

Heart. [*To the Servant.*] Here, take this letter to Mr Clackit. [*Gives a letter.*]

[*Exit Servant.*

Miss Har. What a terrible situation!
[*Aside.*

Heart. I am thunderstruck! [*Aside.*

Miss Har. I cannot speak another word.
[*Aside.*

Heart. My prudence fails me! [*Aside.*

Miss Har. He disapproves my passion, and I shall die with confusion! [*Aside.*

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. The conversation is over, and I may appear. [*Aside.*] Sir Charles is without, sir, and is impatient to know your determination. May he be permitted to see you?

Heart. [*Aside.*] I must retire to conceal my weakness. [*Exit.*

Lucy. Upon my word, this is very whimsical! What is the reason, miss, that your guardian is gone away without giving me an answer?

Miss Har. What a contempt he must have for me, to behave in this manner!
[*Exit.*

Lucy. Extremely well this, and equally foolish, on both sides! But what can be the meaning of it? Ho, ho, I think I have a glimmering at last. Suppose she should not like young Shatterbrains after all; and, indeed, she has never absolutely said she did; who knows but she has at last opened her mind to my good master, and he, finding her taste (like that of other girls at her age) most particularly ridiculous, has not been so complaisant as he used to be. What a shame it is that I don't know more of this matter, a wench of spirit as I am, a favourite of my mistress, and as inquisitive as I ought to be! It is an affront to my character, and I must have satisfaction immediately. [*Going.*] I will go directly to my young mistress; tease her to death, till I am at the bottom of this; and if threatening, soothing, scolding, whimpering, crying, and lying, will not prevail, I will e'en give her warning, and go upon the stage. [*Exit.*

Enter HEARTLY.

Heart. The more I reflect upon what has passed, the more I am convinced that she did not intend writing to this young fellow. What am to I think of it, then? Let a man be ever so much upon his guard against the approaches of vanity, yet he will find himself weak in that quarter. Had not my reason made a little stand against my presumption, I might have interpreted some of Harriet's words in my own favour; but—I may well blush, though alone, at my extravagant folly!—Can it be possible that so young a creature should even cast a thought of that kind upon me? Upon me! Presumptuous vanity!—No, no; I will do her and myself the justice to acknowledge, that, for a very few slight appearances, there are a thousand reasons that destroy so ridiculous a supposition.

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir Cha. Well, Mr Heartly, what are we to hope for?

Heart. Upon my word, sir, I am still in the dark; we puzzle about, indeed, but we don't get forward.

Sir Cha. What the devil is the meaning of all this? There never sure were lovers so difficult to bring together. But have you not been a little too rough with the lady? For as I passed by her but now, she seemed a little out of humour; and, upon my faith, not the less beautiful for a little pouting.

Heart. Upon my word, sir Charles, what I can collect from her behaviour is, that your nephew is not so much in her good graces as he made you believe.

Sir Cha. 'Egad, like enough. But, hold, hold! this must be looked a little into: If it is so, I would be glad to know, why, and wherefore, I have been made so ridiculous. Eh, Mr Heartly, does he take me for his fool, his beast, his Merry Andrew? By the lord Harry———

Heart. In him, a little vanity is excusable.

Sir Cha. I am his vanity's humble servant for that, though.

Heart. He is of an age, sir Charles.———

Sir Cha. Ay, of an age to be very impertinent; but I shall desire him to be less free with his uncle for the future, I assure him.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. I have it, I have it, gentlemen! You need not puzzle any more about the matter. I have got the secret. I know the knight-errant that has wounded our distressed lady.

Sir Cha. Well, and who, and what, child?

Lucy. What, has not she told you, sir!
[*To* HEARTLY.

Heart. Not directly.

Lucy. So much the better. What pleasure it is to discover a secret, and then tell it to all the world! I pressed her so much, that she at last confessed.

Sir Cha. Well, what?

Lucy. That, in the first place, she did not like your nephew.

Sir Cha. And I told the puppy so.

Lucy. That she had a most mortal antipathy for the young men of this age; and that she had settled her affections upon one of riper years, and riper understanding.

Sir Cha. Indeed!

Lucy. And that she expected from a lover in his autumn, more affection, more complaisance, more constancy, and more discretion of course.

Heart. This is very particular.

Sir Cha. Ay, but it is very prudent for all that.

Lucy. In short, as she had openly declared against the nephew, I took upon me to speak of his uncle.

Sir Cha. Of me, child?

Lucy. Yes, of you, sir———And she did not say me nay, but cast such a look, and fetched such a sigh, that if ever I looked and sighed in my life, I know how it is with her.

Sir Cha. What the devil! Why, surely—Eh, Lucy? You joke for certain. Mr Heartly! Eh?

Lucy. Indeed I do not, sir. 'Twas in vain for me to say, that nothing could be so ridiculous as such a choice. Nay, sir, I went a little farther (you'll excuse me), and told her——Good God, madam! said I, why, he is old and gouty, asthmatic, rheumatic, sciatic, spleen-atic—It signified nothing; she had determined.

Sir Cha. But you need not have told her all that.

Heart. I am persuaded, sir Charles, that a good heart and a good mind will prevail more with that young lady, than the more fashionable accomplishments.

Sir Cha. I'll tell you what, neighbour, I have had my days, and have been well received among the ladies, I have. But, in truth, I am rather in my winter, than my autumn; she must mean somebody else. Now I think again, it can't be me. No, no; it can't be me.

Lucy. But I tell you it is, sir. You are the man. Her stars have decreed it; and what they decree, though ever so ridiculous, must come to pass.

Sir Cha. Say you so? Why, then, monsieur nephew, I shall have a little laugh with you, ha, ha, ha! The tid bit is not for you, my nice sir. Your betters must be served before you. But here he comes. Not a word for your life. We'll laugh at him most triumphantly, ha, ha! but mum, mum.

Enter YOUNG CLACKIT.——*Music plays without.*

Young Cla. That will do most divinely well! Bravo, bravo, messieurs Vocal and Instrumental! Stay in that chamber, and I will let you know the time for your appearance. [*To the musicians.*]—Meeting, by accident, with some artists of the string, and my particular friends, I have brought them to celebrate Miss Harriet's and my approaching happiness. [*To* HEARTLY.

Sir Cha. Do you hear the puppy? [*To* LUCY.

Heart. It is time to clear up all mistakes.

Sir Cha. Now for it.

Heart. Miss Harriet, sir, was not destined for you.

Young Cla. What do you say, sir?

Heart. That the young lady has fixed her affections upon another!

Young Cla. Upon another?

Sir Cha. Yes, sir, another: That is English, sir; and you may translate it into French, if you like it better.

Young Cla. *Vous êtes bien drole, mon oncle.*—Ha, ha!

Sir Cha. Ay, ay, show your teeth; you have nothing else for it. But she has fixed her heart upon another, I tell you.

Young Cla. Very well, sir; extremely well.

Sir Cha. And that other, sir, is one to whom you owe great respect.

Young Cla. I am his most respectful humble servant.

Sir Cha. You are a fine youth, my sweet nephew, to tell me a story of a cock and a bull, of you and the young lady, when you have no more interest in her than the czar of Muscovy.

Young Cla. [*Smiling.*] But, my dear uncle, don't carry this jest too far—I shall begin to be uneasy.

Sir Cha. Ay, ay; I know your vanity: You think now that the women are all for you young fellows.

Young Cla. Nine hundred and ninety-nine in a thousand, I believe, uncle: Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Cha. You'll make a damned foolish figure by and by, Jack!

Young Cla. Whoever my precious rival is, he must prepare himself for a little humility; for be he ever so mighty, my dear uncle, I have that in my pocket will lower his top-sails for him.

[*Searching his pockets.*

Sir Cha. Well, what's that?

Young Cla. A fourteen pounder only, my good uncle—A letter from the lady.

[*Takes it out of his pocket.*

Sir Cha. What, to you?

Young Cla. To me, sir—This moment received, and overflowing with the tenderest sentiments.

Sir Cha. To you!

Young Cla. Most undoubtedly. She reproaches me with my excessive modesty. There can be no mistake.

Sir Cha. What letter is this he chatters about?

[*To* HEARTLY.

Heart. One written by me, and dictated by the young lady.

Sir Cha. What! sent by her to him?

Heart. I believe so.

Sir Cha. Well, but then—How the devil—Mrs Lucy!—Eh!—What becomes of your fine story?

Lucy. I don't understand it.

Sir Cha. Nor I!

Heart. [*Hesitating.*] Nor—I——

Young Cla. But I do; and so you will all presently. Well, my dear uncle, what! are you astonished, petrified, annihilated?

Sir Cha. With your impudence, Jack!—But I'll see it out.

Enter MISS HARRIET.

Miss Har. Bless me, Mr Heartly! what is all this music for in the next room?

Young Cla. I brought the gentlemen of the string, mademoiselle, to convince you, that I feel, as I ought, the honour you have done me——— [*Showing the letter.*] But for Heaven's sake, be sincere a little with these good folks: they tell me here, that I am nobody, and there is another happier than myself; and for the soul of me, I don't know how to believe them, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Cha. Let us hear miss speak.

Miss Har. It is a most terrible task: but I am compelled to it; and to hesitate any longer would be injurious to my guardian, his friend, this young gentleman, and my own character.

Young Cla. Most judicious, upon my soul!

Sir Cha. Hold your tongue, Jack.

Young Cla. I am dumb.

Miss Har. You have all been in an error. My bashfulness may have deceived you---My heart never did.

Young Cla. *C'est vrai.*

Miss Har. Therefore, before I declare my sentiments, it is proper that I disavow any engagement: But at the same time must confess——

Young Cla. Ho---ho!—

Miss Har. With fear and shame confess---

Young Cla. *Courage, mademoiselle!*

Miss Har. That another, not you, sir, has gained a power over my heart.

[*To* YOUNG CLACKIT.

Sir Cha. Another, not you; mind that, Jack. Ha, ha!

Miss Har. It is a power, indeed, which he despises. I cannot be deceived in his conduct. Modesty may tie the tongue of our sex, but silence in him could proceed only from contempt.

Sir Cha. How prettily she reproaches me! But I'll soon make it up with her.

Miss Har. As to that letter, sir, your error there is excusable; and I own myself in that particular a little blameable. But it was not my fault that it was sent to you; and the contents must have told you, that it could not possibly be meant for you.

[*To* YOUNG CLACKIT.

Sir Cha. Proof positive, Jack: Say no more. Now is my time to begin. Hem! hem!---Sweet young lady!---hem! whose charms are so mighty, so far transcending every thing that we read of in history or fable, how could you possibly think that my silence proceeded from contempt? Was it natural or prudent, think you, for a man of sixty-five, nay, just entering into his sixty-sixth year——

Young Cla. *O Misericorde!* What, is my uncle my rival! Nay, then, I shall burst, by Jupiter! Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Har. Don't imagine, sir, that, to me, your age is any fault.

Sir Cha. [*Bowing.*] You are very obliging, madam.

Miss Har. Neither is it, sir, a merit of that extraordinary nature, that I should sacrifice to it an inclination which I have conceived for another.

Sir Cha. How is this?

Young Cla. Another! not you---mind that, uncle.

Lucy. What is the meaning of all this?

Young Cla. Proof positive, uncle---and very positive.

Sir Cha. I have been led into a mistake, madam, which I hope you will excuse; and I have made myself very ridiculous, which I hope I shall forget: And so, madam, I am your humble servant. This young lady has something very extraordinary about her!

Heart. What I now see, and the remembrance of what is past, force me to break silence.

Young Cla. Ay, now for it. Hear him, hear him!

Heart. O my Harriet! I too must be disgraced in my turn. Can you think that I have seen and conversed with you unmoved? Indeed I have not. The more I was sensible of your merit, the stronger were my motives to stifle the ambition of my heart. But now I can no longer resist the violence of my passion, which casts me at your feet, the most unworthy, indeed, of all your admirers, but of all the most affectionate.

Young Cla. So, so! the moon has changed, and the grown gentlemen begin to be frisky!

Lucy. What, my master in love, too! I'll never trust these tye-wigs again. [*Aside.*

Miss Har. I have refused my hand to sir Charles and this young gentleman: The one accuses me of caprice, the other of singularity. Should I refuse my hand a third time [*Smiling*], I might draw upon myself a more severe reproach; and therefore I accept your favour, sir, and will endeavour to deserve it.

Heart. And thus I seal my acknowledgments, and from henceforth devote my every thought, and all my services, to the author of my happiness. [*Kisses her hand.*

Sir Cha. Well, my dear discreet nephew, are you satisfied with the fool's part you have given me, and played yourself, in the farce?

Young Cla. What would you have me say, sir? I am too much a philosopher to fret myself, because the wind, which was east this morning, is now west. The poor girl, in pique, has killed herself, to be revenged on me; but hark ye, sir, I believe Heartly will be cursed mad to have me live in his neighbourhood.———A word to the wise———

Sir Cha. Thou hast a most incorrigible vanity,

Jack, and nothing can cure thee. Mr Heartly, I have sense enough, and friendship enough, not to be uneasy at your happiness.

Heart. I hope, sir Charles, that we shall still continue to live as neighbours and friends. For you, my Harriet, words cannot express my wonder or my joy; my future conduct must tell you what a sense I have of my happiness, and how much I shall endeavour to deserve it.

For every charm that ever yet blessed youth,
Accept compliance, tenderness, and truth;
My friendly care shall change to grateful love,
And the fond husband still the GUARDIAN prove.

HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS.

BY

GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

LOVEL, *a man of fashion.*
FREEMAN, *his friend.*
PHILIP, TOM, COACHMAN, KINGSTON, } *servants to* LOVEL.
DUKE'S SERVANT.
SIR HARRY'S SERVANT.
ROBERT, *servant to* FREEMAN.
Fiddler.

WOMEN.

KITTY, COOK, CLOE, } *servants to* LOVEL.
LADY BAB'S MAID.
LADY CHARLOTTE'S MAID.

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I—*An apartment in* FREEMAN'S *house.*

Enter FREEMAN *and* LOVEL.

Free. A COUNTRY boy! ha, ha, ha!——How long has this scheme been in your head?

Lov. Some time.———I am now convinced, of what you have often been hinting to me, that I am confoundedly cheated by my servants.

Free. Oh, are you satisfied at last, Mr Lovel? I always told you, that there is not a worse set of servants in the parish of St James's, than in your kitchen.

Lov. 'Tis with some difficulty I believe it now, Mr Freeman; though, I must own, my expences often make me stare.———Philip, I am sure is an honest fellow; and I will swear for my blacks. —If there is a rogue among my folks, it is that surly dog Tom.

Free. You are mistaken in every one. Philip is an hypocritical rascal; Tom has a good deal of surly honesty about him; and for your blacks, they are as bad as your whites.

Lov. Prithee, Freeman, how came you to be so well acquainted with my people? None of the wenches are handsome enough to move the affections of a middle-aged gentleman as you are—— ha, ha, ha!

Free. You are a young man, Mr Lovel, and take a pride in a number of idle unnecessary servants, who are the plague and reproach of this kingdom.

Lov. Charles, you are an old-fashioned fellow. Servants a plague and reproach! ha, ha, ha! I would have forty more, if my house would hold them. Why, man, in Jamaica, before I was ten years old, I had a hundred blacks kissing my feet every day.

Free. You gentry of the Western Isles are

high-mettled ones, and love pomp and parade.—I have seen it delight your soul, when the people in the street have stared at your equipage; especially if they whispered loud enough to be heard, That is squire Lovel, the great West Indian—ha, ha, ha!

Lov. I should be very sorry if we were as splenetic as you northern islanders, who are devoured with melancholy and fog——ha, ha, ha! No, sir, we are children of the sun, and are born to diffuse the bounteous favour which our noble parent is pleased to bestow on us.

Free. I wish you had more of your noble parent's regularity, and less of his fire. As it is, you consume so fast, that not one in twenty of you live to be fifty years old.

Lov. But in that fifty we live two hundred, my dear; mark that———But to business—I am resolved upon my frolic——I will know whether my servants are rogues or not. If they are, I'll bastinado the rascals; if not, I think I ought to pay for my impertinence.———Pray tell me, is not your Robert acquainted with my people? Perhaps he may give a little light into the thing.

Free. To tell you the truth, Mr Lovel, your servants are so abandoned, that I have forbid him your house.——However, if you have a mind to ask him any question, he shall be forthcoming.

Lov. Let us have him.

Free. You shall: but it is an hundred to one if you get any thing out of him; for though he is a very honest fellow, yet he is so much of a servant, that he'll never tell any thing to the disadvantage of another.——Who waits?

Enter Servant.

Send Robert to me. [*Exit Servant.*]—And what was it determined you upon this project at last?

Lov. This letter. It is an anonymous one, and so ought not to be regarded; but it has something honest in it, and put me upon satisfying my curiosity. Read it.

[*Gives the letter.*

Free. I should know something of this hand—

[*Reads.*

'To Peregrine Lovel, esq.

'Please your honour,

'I take the liberty to acquaint your honour, that 'you are sadly cheated by your servants.—Your 'honour will find it as I say—I am not willing 'to be known; whereof, if I am, it may bring 'one into trouble.

'So no more, from your honour's

'Servant to command.'

—Odd and honest! Well—and now what are the steps you intend to take?

[*Returns the letter.*

Lov. I shall immediately apply to my friend the manager for a disguise.—Under the form of a gawky country boy, I will be an eye-witness of my servants' behaviour.—You must assist me, Mr Freeman.

Free. As how, Mr Lovel?

Lov. My plan is this—I gave it out that I was going to my borough in Devonshire; and yesterday set out with my servant in great form, and lay at Basingstoke.———

Free. Well?

Lov. I ordered the fellow to make the best of his way down into the country, and told him that I would follow him; instead of that, I turned back, and am just come to town: *Ecce signum!* [*Points to his boots.*

Free. It is now one o'clock.

Lov. This very afternoon I shall pay my people a visit.

Free. How will you get in?

Lov. When I am properly habited, you shall get me introduced to Philip, as one of your tenant's sons, who wants to be made a good servant of.

Free. They will certainly discover you.

Lov. Never fear; I'll be so countrified, that you shall not know me.———As they are thoroughly persuaded I am many miles off, they'll be more easily imposed on. Ten to one but they begin to celebrate my departure with a drinking bout, if they are what you describe them———

Free. Shall you be able to play your part?

Lov. I am surprized, Mr Freeman, that you, who have known me from my infancy, should not remember my abilities in that way.—But you old fellows have short memories.

Free. What should I remember?

Lov. How I played Daniel in the Conscious Lovers at school, and afterwards arrived at the distinguished character of the mighty Mr Scrub—

[*Mimicking.*

Free. Ha, ha, ha! that is very well—Enough ———Here is Robert.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Your honour ordered me to wait on you.

Free. I did, Robert. Robert!

Rob. Sir?

Free. Come here.—You know, Robert, I have a good opinion of your integrity.

Rob. I have always endeavoured that your honour should.

Free. Pray, have not you some acquaintance among Mr Lovel's people?

Rob. A little, please your honour.

Free. How do they behave?—We have nobody but friends—you may speak out.

Lov. Ay, Robert, speak out.

Rob. I hope your honours will not insist on my saying any thing in an affair of this kind?

Lov. Oh, but we do insist, if you know any thing———

Rob. Sir, I am but a servant myself: and it would not become me to speak ill of a brother-servant.

Free. Psha! this is false honesty!—speak out.

Rob. Don't oblige me, good sir. Consider, sir, a servant's bread depends upon his *carackter.*

Lov. But if a servant uses me ill ———

Rob. Alas, sir! what is one man's poison is another man's meat.

Free. You see how they trim for one another!

Rob. Service, sir, is no inheritance.---A servant that is not approved in one place, may give satisfaction in another. Every body must live, your honour.

Lov. I like your heartiness as well as your caution; but, in my case, it is necessary that I should know the truth.

Rob. The truth, sir, is not to be spoken at all times; it may bring one into trouble; whereof if—

Free. [*Musing.*] Whereof if—Pray, Mr Lovel, let me see that letter again.—[LOVEL *gives the letter.*]——Aye——it must be so; Robbert——

Rob. Sir?

Free. Do you know any thing of this letter?

Rob. Letter, your honour?

Free. Yes, letter.

Rob. I have seen the hand before.

Lov. He blushes!

Free. I ask you, if you were concerned in writing this letter? You never told me a lie yet, and I expect the truth from you now.

Rob. Pray, your honour, don't ask me.

Free. Did you write it? Answer me.

Rob. I cannot deny it. [*Bowing.*

Lov. What induced you to it?

Rob. I will tell truth—I have seen such waste and extravagance, and riot and drunkenness, in your kitchen, sir, that, as my master's friend, I could not help discovering it to you.

Lov. Go on.

Rob. I am sorry to say it to your honour, but your honour is not only imposed on, but laughed at by all your servants, especially by Philip, who is a---very bad man.

Lov. Philip! an ungrateful dog! Well?

Rob. I could not presume to speak to your honour; and therefore I resolved, though but a poor scribe, to write your honour a letter.

Lov. Robert, I am greatly indebted to you. Here— [*Offers money.*

Rob. On any other account than this, I should be proud to receive your honour's bounty; but now I beg to be excused.

Lov. Thou hast a noble heart, Robert, and I'll not forget you! Freeman, he must be in the secret. Wait your master's orders.

Rob. I will, your honour. [*Exit.*

Free. Well, sir, are you convinced now?

Lov. Convinced? Yes; and I'll be among the scoundrels before night. You or Robert must contrive some way or other to get me introduced to Philip, as one of your cottagers' boys out of Essex.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! you'll make a fine figure!

Lov. They shall make a fine figure. It must be done this afternoon: walk with me across the Park, and I'll tell you the whole. My name shall be *Jemmy;* and I am come to be a gentleman's servant---and will do my best, and hope to get a good *carackter.* [*Mimicking.*

Free. But what will you do if you find them rascals?

Lov. Discover myself, and blow them all to the devil! Come along.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! Bravo! Jemmy! Bravo! ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Park.*

Enter Duke's Servant.

What wretches are ordinary servants, that go on in the same vulgar tract every day! eating, working, and sleeping!—But we, who have the honour to serve the nobility, are of another species. We are above the common forms, have servants to wait upon us, and are as lazy and luxurious as our masters——Ha! my dear Sir Harry!

Enter SIR HARRY'S *Servant.*

How have you done these thousand years?

Sir Har. My lord duke!—your grace's most obedient servant.

Duke. Well, baronet, and where have you been?

Sir Har. At Newmarket, my lord. We have had devilish fine sport!

Duke. And a good appearance, I hear—pox take it, I should have been there; but our old duchess died, and we were obliged to keep house for the decency of the thing.

Sir Har. I picked up fifteen pieces.

Duke. Psha! a trifle!

Sir Har. The viscount's people have been bloodily taken in this meeting.

Duke. Credit me, baronet, they know nothing of the turf.

Sir Har. I assure you, my lord, they lost every match; for Crab was beat hollow, Careless threw his rider, and Miss Slammerkin had the distemper.

Duke. Ha, ha, ha! I'm glad on't—Taste this snuff, sir Harry. [*Offers his box.*

Sir Har. 'Tis good rapee.

Duke. Right Strasburg, I assure you; and of my own importing.

Sir Har. Aye!

Duke. The city people adulterate it so con-

foundedly, that I always import my own snuff. I wish my lord would do the same; but he is so indolent!—When did you see the girls? I saw lady Bab this morning; but, 'fore Gad, whether it be love or reading, she looked as pale as a penitent.

Sir Har. I have just had this card from Lovel's people. [*Reads.*] 'Philip and Mrs Kitty pre-'sent their compliments to sir Harry, and desire 'the honour of his company this evening, to be 'of a smart party, and eat a bit of supper.'

Duke. I have the same invitation. Their master, it seems, is gone to his borough.

Sir Har. You'll be with us, my lord?—Philip's a blood.

Duke. A buck of the first head! I'll tell you a secret; he's going to be married.

Sir Har. To whom?

Duke. To Kitty.

Sir Har. No!

Duke. Yes, he is; and I intend to cuckold him.

Sir Har. Then we may depend upon your grace for certain. Ha, ha, ha!

Duke. If our house breaks up in a tolerable time, I'll be with you———Have you any thing for us?

Sir Har. Yes, a little bit of poetry. I must be at the cocoa-tree myself till eight.

Duke. Heigh, ho! I am quite out of spirits—I had a damned debauch last night, baronet——Lord Francis, Bob the bishop, and I, tipt off four bottles of Burgundy a-piece—Ha! there are two fine girls coming! Faith, lady Bab! aye, and lady Charlotte! [*Takes out his glass.*

Sir Har. We'll not join them.

Duke. O yes; Bab is a fine wench, notwithstanding her complexion: though I should be glad she would keep her teeth cleaner——Your English women are damned negligent about their teeth———How is your Charlotte in that particular?

Sir Har. My Charlotte!

Duke. Ay, the world says you are to have her.

Sir Har. I own I did keep her company; but we are off, my lord.

Duke. How so?

Sir Har. Between you and me, she has a plaguy thick pair of legs!

Duke. Oh, damn it; that's insufferable!

Sir Har. Besides, she's a fool, and missed her opportunity with the old countess.

Duke. I am afraid, baronet, you love money. Rot it, I never save a shilling! Indeed I am sure of a place in the excise. Lady Charlotte is to be of the party to-night; how do you manage that?

Sir Har. Why, we do meet at a third place; are very civil, and look queer, and laugh, and abuse one another, and all that.

Duke. A-la-mode, ha!---Here they are.

Sir Har. Let us retire. [*They retire.*

Enter LADY BAB'S *Maid, and* LADY CHARLOTTE'S *Maid.*

Lady Bab. Oh fie, lady Charlotte! you are quite indelicate; I am sorry for your taste.

Lady Char. Well, I say it again, I love Vauxhall.

Lady Bab. O my stars! Why, there is nobody there but filthy citizens.

Lady Char. We were in hopes the raising the price would have kept them out, ha, ha, ha!

Lady Bab. Ha, ha, ha!——*Runelow* for my money.

Lady Char. Now you talk of *Runelow*, when did you see the colonel, lady Bab?

Lady Bab. The colonel! I hate the fellow—He had the assurance to talk of a creature in Gloustershire, before my face.

Lady Char. He is a pretty man for all that—Soldiers, you know, have their mistresses every where.

Lady Bab. I despise him! How goes on your affair with the baronet?

Lady Char. The baronet is a stupid wretch, and I shall have nothing to say to him. You are to be at Lovel's to-night, lady Bab?

Lady Bab. Unless I alter my mind—I don't admire visiting these commoners, lady Charlotte.

Lady Char. Oh, but Mrs Kitty has taste.

Lady Bab. She affects it.

Lady Char. The duke is fond of her, and he has judgment.

Lady Bab. The duke might shew his judgment much better. [*Holding up her head.*

Lady Char. There he is, and the baronet, too. Take no notice of them. We'll rally them by and by.

Lady Bab. Dull souls! Let us set up a loud laugh, and leave them.

Lady Char. Ay, let us be gone; for the common people do so stare at us—we shall certainly be mobbed.

Both. Ha, ha, ha!—ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

DUKE *and* SIR HARRY *come forward.*

Duke. They certainly saw us, and are gone off laughing at us.—I must follow.

Sir Har. No, no.

Duke. I must, I must have a party of raillery with them; a bon mot or so. Sir Harry, you'll excuse me. Adieu! I'll be with you in the evening, if possible: though, hark ye! there is a bill depending in our house, which the ministry make a point of our attending; and so, you know, mum! we must mind the stops of the great fiddle.—Adieu! [*Exit* DUKE.

Sir Har. What a coxcomb this is! and the fellow can't read. It was but the other day that he was cow-boy in the country; then was bound prentice to a periwig-maker, got into my lord duke's family, and now sets up for a fine gentleman: *O tempora, O mores!*

Re-enter DUKE'S SERVANT.

Duke. Sir Harry, prithee, what are we to do at Lovel's when we come there?

Sir Har. We shall have the fiddles, I suppose?

Duke. The fiddles! I have done with dancing ever since the last fit of the gout. I'll tell you what, my dear boy, I positively cannot be with them, unless we have a little—

[*Makes a motion as if with the dice-box.*

Sir Har. Fie, my lord duke!

Duke. Look ye, baronet, I insist on it.—Who the devil of any fashion can possibly spend an evening without it?—But I shall lose the girls.—How grave you look, ha, ha, ha!—Well, let there be fiddles.

Sir Har. But, my dear lord, I shall be quite miserable without you.

Duke. Well, I won't be particular; I'll do as the rest do.—Tol, lol, lol!

[*Exit singing and dancing.*

Sir Har. He had the assurance, last winter, to court a tradesman's daughter in the city, with two thousand pounds to her fortune, and got me to write his love-letters He pretended to be an ensign in a marching regiment; so wheedled the folks into consent, and would have carried the girl off, but was unluckily prevented by the washer-woman, who happened to be his first cousin.

Enter PHILIP.

Mr Philip, your servant.

Phi. You are welcome to England, sir Harry; I hope you received the card, and will do us the honour of your company.—My master is gone into Devonshire:—We'll have a roaring night.

Sir Har. I'll certainly wait on you.

Phi. The girls will be with us.

Sir Har. Is this a wedding-supper, Philip?

Phi. What do you mean, sir Harry?

Sir Har. The duke tells me so.

Phi. The duke's a fool.

Sir Har. Take care what you say; his grace is a bruiser.

Phi. I am a pupil of the same academy; and not afraid of him, I assure you. Sir Harry, we'll have a noble batch—I have such wine for you!

Sir Har. I am your man, Phil.

Phi. Egad the cellar shall bleed: I have some Burgundy that is fit for an emperor.———My master would have given his ears for some of it t'other day, to treat my lord what d'ye-call-him with; but, I told him it was all gone, ha! charity begins at home, ha!——Odso, here is Mr Freeman, my master's intimate friend; he's a dry one—Don't let us be seen together—he'll suspect something.

Sir Har. I am gone.

Phi. Away, away;——remember—Burgundy is the word.

Sir Har. Right—Long corks! ha, Phil! [*Mimicks the drawing of a cork.*]—Yours. [*Exit.*

Phi. Now for a cast of my office—A starch phiz, a canting phrase, and as many lies as necessary.—Hem!

Enter FREEMAN.

Free. Oh, Philip! How do you do, Philip? You have lost your master, I find?

Phi. It is a loss, indeed, sir.—So good a gentleman!—He must be nearly got into Devonshire by this time.———Sir, your servant.

Free. Why in such a hurry, Philip?

Phi. I shall leave the house as little as possible, now his honour is away.

Free. You are in the right, Philip.

Phi. Servants, at such times, are too apt to be negligent and extravagant, sir.

Free. True; the master's absence is the time to try a good servant in.

Phi. It is so, sir. Sir, your servant. [*Going.*

Free. Oh, Mr Philip! pray stay; you must do me a piece of service.

Phi. You command me, sir.

Free. I look upon you, Philip, as one of the best behaved, most sensible, completest [*Philip bows.*] rascals in the world! [*Aside.*

Phi. Your honour is pleased to compliment.

Free. There is a tenant of mine in Essex, a very honest man———Poor fellow, he has a great number of children; and they have sent me one of them, a tall gawky boy, to make a servant of; but my folks say they can do nothing with him.

Phi. Let me have him, sir.

Free. In truth he is an unlicked cub.

Phi. I will lick him into something, I warrant you, sir.—Now my master is absent, I shall have a good deal of time upon my hands; and I hate to be idle, sir: in two months I'll engage to finish him.

Free. I don't doubt it. [*Aside.*

Phi. I have twenty pupils in the parish of St James's; and, for a table, or a side-board, or behind an equipage, or in the delivery of a message, or any thing—

Free. What have you for entrance?

Phi. I always leave it to gentlemen's generosity.

Free. Here is a guinea—I beg he may be taken care of.

Phi. That he shall, I promise you.—[*Aside.* Your honour knows me?

Free. Thoroughly. [*Aside.*

Phi. When can I see him, sir?

Free. Now, directly—Call at my house, and take him in your hand.

Phi. Sir, I will be with you in a minute; I will but step into the market to let the tradesmen know they must not trust any of our servants, now they are at board wages—Humph!

Free. How happy is Mr Lovel in so excellent a servant! [*Exit.*

Phi. Ha, ha, ha! This is one of my master's

prudent friends, who dines with him three times a-week, and thinks he is mighty generous in giving me five guineas at Christmas.—Damn all such sneaking scoundrels, I say! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*The servants hall in* LOVEL'S *house.*

KINGSTON *and* COACHMAN, *drunk and sleepy.*

[*A knocking at the door.*

King. Somebody knocks; Coachy, go—go to the door, Coachy.

Coach. I'll not go—do you go; you black dog.

King. Devil shall fetch me if I go.

[*Knocking.*

Coach. Why, then, let them stay; I'll not go, damme—Ay, knock the door down, and let yourself in. [*Knocking.*

King. Ay, ay, knock again, knock again!

Coach. Master is gone into Devonshire; so he can't be there; so I'll go to sleep!

King. So will I; I'll go to sleep, too!

Coach. You lie, devil! you shall not go to sleep till I am asleep—I am king of the kitchen!

King. No, you are not king; but, when you are drunk, you are sulky as hell! Here is Cooky coming; she is king, and queen, too!

Enter COOK.

Cook. Somebody has knocked at the door twenty times; and nobody hears! Why, Coachman, Kingston! Ye drunken bears, why don't one of you go to the door?

Coach. You go, Cook; you go.

Cook. Hang me if I go!

King. Yes, yes, Cooky, go; Mollsy, Pollsy, go!

Cook. Out, you black toad!—It is none of my business, and go I will not. [*Sits down.*

Enter PHILIP *with* LOVEL *disguised.*

Phi. I might have staid at the door all night, as the little man in the play says, if I had not had the key of the door in my pocket—What is come to you all?

Cook. There is John Coachman and Kingston as drunk as two bears.

Phi. Ah, ah! my lads;—what! finished already? These are the the very best of servants! Poor fellows! I suppose they have been drinking their master's good journey? ha, ha, ha!

Lovel. No doubt on't. [*Aside.*

Phi. Yo ho! get to bed, you dogs, and sleep yourself sober, that you may be able to get drunk again by-and-by. They are as fast as a church, Jemmy.

Lovel. Anan?

Phi. Do you love drinking?

Lovel. Yes; I loves ale!

Phi. You dog, you shall swim in Burgundy.

Lovel. Burgundy! what's that?

Phi. Cook, wake those honest gentlemen, and send them to bed.

Cook. It is impossible to wake them.

Lovel. I think I could wake them, sir, if I might—Heh!

Phi. Do, Jemmy; wake them, Jemmy; ha, ha, ha!

Lovel. Hip—Mr Coachman.

[*Gives him a great slap on the face.*

Coach. Oh, oh!—What! Zounds! Oh! damn you!

Lovel. What! blackey, blackey!

[*Pulls him by the nose.*

King. Oh, oh!—What now? Curse you! Oh!—Cot dam you!

Lovel. Ha, ha, ha!

Phi. Ha, ha, ha! Well done, Jemmy! Cook, see those gentry to bed.

Cook. Marry come up, I say so, too; not I indeed.

Coach. She shan't see us to bed—We'll see ourselves to bed.

King. We got drunk together, and we'll go to bed together. [*Exeunt, reeling.*

Phi. You see how we live, boy?

Lovel. Yes; I *sees* how you live.

Phi. Let the supper be elegant, Cook.

Cook. Who pays for it?

Phi. My master to be sure; who else? ha, ha, ha! He is rich enough, I hope, ha, ha, ha!

Lovel. Humph! [*Aside.*

Phi. Each of us must take a part, and sink it in our next weekly bills; that is the way.

Lovel. So! [*Aside.*

Cook. Prithee, Philip, what boy is this?

Phi. A boy of Freeman's recommending.

Lovel. Yes; I'm squire Freeman's boy—heh!

Cook. Freeman is a stingy hound; and you may tell him I say so. He dines here three times a week, and I never saw the colour of his money yet.

Lovel. Ha, ha, ha! that is good—Freeman shall have it. [*Aside.*

Cook. I must step to the tallow-chandler's to dispose of some of my perquisites; and, then, I'll set about supper.

Phi. Well said, Cook! that is right; the perquisite is the thing, Cook.

Cook. Cloe, Cloe! where are you, Cloe?

[*Calls.*

Enter CLOE.

Cloe. Yes, mistress.

Cook. Take that box and follow me. [*Exit.*

Cloe. Yes, mistress. [*Takes the box.*] Who is this? [*Seeing* LOVEL.] Hee, hee, hee! Oh! This is pretty boy! Hee, hee, hee! Oh! This is pretty red hair, hee, hee, hee! You shall be in love with me by-and-by! hee, hee!

[*Exit chucking* LOVEL *under the chin.*

Lovel. A very pretty amour! [*Aside.*] Oh la!

what a fine room is this! Is this the dining-room, pray, sir?

Phi. No; our drinking-room.

Lovel. La, la! what a fine lady here is! This is madam, I suppose?

Phi. Where have you been, Kitty?

Enter KITTY.

Kit. I have been disposing of some of his honour's shirts and other linen, which it is a shame his honour should wear any longer; mother Barter is above, and waits to know if you have any commands for her.

Phi. I shall dispose of my wardrobe to-morrow.

Kit. Who have we here? [LOVEL *bows.*

Phi. A boy of Freeman's; a poor, silly fool.

Lovel. Thank you. [*Aside.*

Phi. I intend the entertainment this evening as a compliment to you, Kitty.

Kit. I am your humble, Mr Philip.

Phi. But, I beg I may see none of your airs, or hear any of your French gibberish with the duke.

Kit. Don't be jealous, Phil. [*Fawningly.*

Phi. I intend, before our marriage, to settle something handsome upon you; and, with the five hundred pounds which I have already saved in this extravagant fellow's family——

Lovel. A dog! [*Aside.*] O la, la! what! have you got five hundred pounds?

Phi. Peace, blockhead.

Kit. I'll tell you what you shall do, Phil.

Phi. Ay, what shall I do?

Kit. You shall set up a chocolate-house, my dear!

Phi. Yes, and be cuckolded? [*Apart.*

Kit. You know my education was a very genteel one. I was a half-boarder at Chelsea, and I speak French like a native—*Comment vous porter vous, monsieur.* [*Awkwardly.*

Phi. Psha, psha!

Kit. One is nothing without French—I shall shine in the bar—Do you speak French, boy?

Lovel. Anan?—

Kit. Anan—O the fool! ha, ha, ha!—Come here, do, and let me new-mould you a little. You must be a good boy, and wait upon the gentlefolks to-night. [*She ties, and powders his hair.*

Lovel. Yes, an't please you, I'll do my best.

Kit. His best! O the natural! This is a strange head of hair of thine, boy—It is so coarse, and so carrotty.

Lovel. All my brothers and sisters be red in the pole.

Phil. Kit. Ha, ha, ha! [*Laugh.*

Kit. There now, you are something like—Come, Philip, give the boy a lesson, and then I'll lecture him out of the Servant's Guide.

Phi. Come, sir; first, Hold up your head—very well—Turn out your toes, sir—very well—Now call coach—

Lovel. What is call coach?

Phi. Thus, sir—Coach, coach, coach! [*Loud.*

Lovel. Coach, coach, coach! [*Imitating.*

Phi. Admirable!—the knave has a good ear—Now, sir, tell me a lie.

Lovel. O la! I never told a lie in all my life.

Phi. Then it is high time you should begin now; what is a servant good for, that can't tell a lie?

Kit. And stand in it; now I'll lecture him—[*Takes out a book.*]—This is 'The Servant's 'Guide to Wealth, by Timothy Shoulderknot, 'formerly servant to several noblemen, and now 'an officer in the customs; necessary for all ser-'vants.'

Phi. Mind, sir, what excellent rules the book contains, and remember them well—Come, Kitty, begin——

Kit. [*Reads.*] Advice to the footman.

'Let it for ever be your plan,
'To be the master, not the man.
'And do as little as you can.

Lovel. He, he, he! Yes, I'll do nothing at all; not I.

Kit. 'At market, never think it stealing,
'To keep with tradesmen proper dealing;
'All stewards have a fellow-feeling.'

Phi. You will understand that better one day or other, boy.

Kit. To the groom.

'Never allow your master able,
'To judge of matters in the stable:
'If he should roughly speak his mind,
'Or to dismiss you seems inclined,
'Lame the best horse, or break his wind.'

Lovel. Oddiness! that's good—he, he, he!

Kit. To the coachman.

'If your good master on you doats,
'Ne'er leave his house to serve a stranger;
'But pocket hay, and straw, and oats,
'And let the horses eat the manger.'

Lovel. Eat the manger! He, he, he!

Kit. I won't give you too much at a time——Here, boy, take the book, and read it every night and morning, before you say your prayers.

Phi. Ha, ha, ha! very-good; but now for business.

Kit. Right; I'll go and get one of the damask table-cloths, and some napkins; and be sure, Phil. your side-board is very smart. [*Exit.*

Phi. That it shall—come, Jemmy—— [*Exit.*

Lovel. Soh! soh! it works well—— [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Servants' Hall, with the supper and side-board set out.*

PHILIP, KITTY, *and* LOVEL.

Kit. WELL, Phil, what think you? Don't we look very smart? Now let them come as soon as they will, we shall be ready for them.

Phi. 'Tis all very well; but——

Kit. But what?

Phi. Why, I wish we could get that snarling cur, Tom, to make one.

Kit. What is the matter with him?

Phi. I don't know; he's a queer son of a—

Kit. Oh, I know him; he is one of your sneaking, half-bred fellows, that prefers his master's interest to his own.

Phi. Here he is.

Enter TOM.

And why won't you make one to-night, Tom? Here's cook, and coachman, and all of us.

Tom. I tell you again, I will not make one.

Phi. We shall have something that's good.

Tom. And make your master pay for it?

Phi. I warrant, now, you think yourself mighty honest—ha, ha, ha!

Tom. A little honester than you, I hope, and not brag, neither.

Kit. Hark you, Mr Honesty, don't be saucy—

Lovel. This is worth listening to. [*Aside.*

Tom. What, madam, you are afraid for your c—ly, are you?

Kit. Cully, sirrah, cully! Afraid, sirrah! Afraid of what?

[*Goes up to* TOM.

Phi. Ay, sir, afraid of what?

[*Goes up on the other side.*

Lovel. Ay, sir, afraid of what? [*Goes up too.*

Tom. I value none of you——I know your tricks.

Phi. What do you know, sirrah?

Kit. Ay; what do you know?

Lovel. Ay, sir, what do you know?

Tom. I know that you two are in fee with every tradesman belonging to the house——and that you, Mr Clodpole, are in a fair way to be hanged— [*Strikes* LOVEL.

Phi. What do you strike the boy for?

Lovel. It is an honest blow. [*Aside.*

Tom. I'll strike him again—'tis such as you that bring a scandal upon us all.

Kit. Come, none of your impudence, Tom.

Tom. Egad, madam, the gentry may well complain, when they get such servants as you in their houses. There's your good friend, mother Barter, the old cloaths-woman, the greatest thief in town, just now gone out with her apron full of his honour's linen.

Kit. Well, sir, and did you never—ha?

Tom. No, never: I have lived with his honour four years, and never took the value of that—[*Snapping his fingers.*]—His honour is a prince, gives noble wages, and keeps noble company; and yet you two are not contented, but cheat him wherever you can lay your fingers. Shame on you!

Lovel. The fellow I thought a rogue, is the only honest servant in my house! [*Aside.*

Kit. Out, you mealy-mouthed cur!

Phi. Well, go tell his honour; do—ha, ha, ha!

Tom. I scorn that—Damn an informer! But yet I hope his honour will find you two out one day or other, that's all—

[*Exit* TOM.

Kit. This fellow must be taken care of.

Phi. I'll do his business for him, when his honour comes to town.

Lovel. You lie, you scoundrel! You will not. [*Aside.*]—O la! here's a fine gentleman!

Enter DUKE'S *Servant.*

Duke. Ah, ma chere mademseile! Comment vous portez vous? [*Salute.*

Kit. Fort bien, je vous remercier, monsieur.

Phi. Now we shall have nonsense by wholesale.

Duke. How do you do, Philip?

Phi. Your grace's humble servant.

Duke. But, my dear Kitty— [*Talk apart.*

Phi. Jemmy.

Lovel. Anan?

Phi. Come along with me, and I'll make you free of the cellar.

Lovel. Yes—I will—but won't you ask he to drink?

Phi. No, no; he will have his share by-and-by; come along.

Lovel. Yes. [*Exeunt* PHIL. *and* LOVEL.

Kit. Indeed I thought your grace an age in coming.

Duke. Upon honour, our house is but this moment up. You have a damned vile collection of pictures, I observe, above stairs, Kitty. Your squire has no taste.

Kit. No taste! that's impossible, for he has laid out a vast deal of money.

Duke. There is not an original picture in the whole collection——Where could he pick them up?

Kit. He employs three or four men to buy for him, and he always pays for originals.

Duke. Donnez moi votre eau de luce——My head aches confoundedly.—[*She gives a smelling bottle.*]—Kitty, my dear, I hear you are going to be married?

Kit. Pardonnez moi for that.

Duke. If you get a boy, I'll be a godfather, faith——

Kit. How you rattle, duke!—I am thinking, my lord, when I had the honour to see you first.

Duke. At the play, mademoiselle.

Kit. Your grace loves a play?

Duke. No; 'tis a dull, old-fashioned, entertainment; I hate it—

Kit. Well, give me a good tragedy.

Duke. It must not be a modern one, then—You are devilish handsome, Kate—Kiss me—

[*Offers to kiss her.*

Enter SIR HARRY'S *Servant.*

Sir Har. O ho! Are you thereabouts, my lord duke? That may do very well by-and-by——However, you'll never find me behind hand.

[*Offers to kiss her.*

Duke. Stand off! You are a commoner; nothing under nobility approaches Kitty.

Sir Har. You are so devilish proud of your nobility—now, I think, we have more true nobility than you—Let me tell you, sir, a knight of the shire——

Duke. A knight of the shire! ha, ha, ha! a mighty honour, truly, to represent all the fools of the county!

Kit. O lud! this is charming, to see two noblemen quarrel!

Sir Har. Why, any fool may be born to a title, but only a wise man can make himself honourable.

Kit. Well said, sir Harry! that is good *morillity.*

Duke. I hope you make some difference between hereditary honours, and the huzza's of a mob?

Kit. Very smart, my lord; now, sir Harry—

Sir Har. If you make use of your hereditary honours to screen you from debt——

Duke. Zounds, sir, what do you mean by that?

Kit. Hold, hold! I shall have some fine old noble blood spilt here——Ha' done, sir Harry!——

Sir Har. Not I; why, he is always valuing himself upon his upper house.

Duke. We have dignity. [*Slow.*

Sir Har. But what comes of your dignity, if we refuse the supplies? [*Quick.*

Kit. Peace, peace! here's lady Bab——

Enter LADY BAB'S *Servant in a chair.*

Dear lady Bab——

Lady Bab. Mrs Kitty, your servant; I was afraid of taking cold, and so ordered the chair down stairs. Well, and how do you do? My lord duke, your servant—and sir Harry, too—yours.

Duke. Your ladyship's devoted- ——

Lady Bab. I'm afraid I have trespassed in point of time—[*Looks on her watch.*]—But I got into my favourite author.

Duke. Yes; I found her ladyship at her studies this morning—Some wicked poem——

Lady Bab. O you wretch! I never read but one book.

Kit. What is your ladyship so fond of?

Lady Bab. Shickspur. Did you never read *Shickpsur?*

Kit. Shickspur! Shickspur! Who wrote it? No, I never read *Shickspur.*

Lady Bab. Then you have an immense pleasure to come.

Kit. Well, then, I'll read it over one afternoon or other—Here's lady Charlotte.

Enter LADY CHARLOTTE'S MAID *in a chair.*

Dear lady Charlotte!

Lady Char. Oh, Mrs Kitty, I thought I never should have reached your house—such a fit of the colic seized me—oh, lady Bab, how long has your ladyship been here? My chairmen were such drones—my lord duke! the pink of all good-breeding!

Duke. O madam! [*Bowing.*

Lady Char. And sir Harry! Your servant, sir Harry. [*Formally.*

Sir Har. Madam, your servant; I am sorry to hear your ladyship has been ill.

Lady Char. You must give me leave to doubt the sincerity of that sorrow, sir; remember the Park.

Sir Har. The Park! I'll explain that affair, madam.

Lady Char. I want none of your explanations. [*Scornfully.*

Sir Har. Dear lady Charlotte!

Lady Char. No, sir; I have observed your coolness of late, and despise you. A trumpery baronet!

Sir Har. I see how it is; nothing will satisfy you but nobility—that sly dog the marquis—

Lady Char. None of your reflections, sir—The marquis is a person of honour, and above inquiring after a lady's fortune, as you meanly did.

Sir Har. I—I—madam? I scorn such a thing, I assure you, madam, I never—that is to say—Egad, I am confounded—my lord duke, what shall I say to her? Pray help me out. [*Aside.*

Duke. Ask her to show her legs—ha, ha, ha! [*Aside.*

Enter PHILIP *and* LOVEL, *loaded with bottles.*

Phi. Here, my little peer—here is wine that will ennoble your blood—both your ladyship's most humble servant.

Lovel. [*Affecting to be drunk.*]—Both your ladyship's most humble servant.

Kit. Why, Philip, you have made the boy drunk.

Phi. I have made him free of the cellar—ha, ha, ha!

Lovel. Yes, I am free—I am very free.

Phi. He has had a smack of every sort of wine, from humble port, to imperial tokay.

Lovel. Yes, I have been drinking kokay.

Kit. Go, get you some sleep, child, that you may wait on his lordship by-and-by.

Lovel. Thank you, madam; I will certainly wait on their lordships and their ladyships, too.

[*Aside, and exit.*

Phi. Well, ladies, and what say you to a dance, and then to supper? Have you had your tea?

All. A dance, a dance! No tea! No tea!

Phi. Here, fiddler—[*Calls.*]—I have provided a very good hand, you see.

Enter fiddler with a wooden leg.

Sir Har. Not so well legged, Mr Philip.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Duke. Le drole! Hark'e, Mr ——— which leg do you beat time with?

All. Ha, ha, ha! [*Loud laugh.*

Sir Har. What, can you play, Domine?

Fid. Any thing, an't please your honour, from a jig to a sonata.

Phi. Come here; where are all our people?

Enter COACHMAN, COOK, KINGSTON, *and* CLOE.

I'll couple you—My lord duke will take Kitty; lady Bab will do me the honour of her hand; sir Harry and lady Charlotte; coachman and cook, and the two devils dance together; ha, ha, ha!

Duke. With submission, the country dances by-and-by.

Lady Char. Ay, ay; French dances before supper, and country-dances after. I beg the duke and Mrs Kitty may give us a minuet.

Duke. Dear lady Charlotte, consider my poor gout; sir Harry will oblige us.

[SIR HAR. *bows.*

All. Minuet, sir Harry! minuet, sir Harry!

Fid. What minuet would your honours please to have?

Kit. What minuet? let me see; play Marshal Thingumbob's minuet.

[*A minuet by* SIR HAR. *and* KIT. *awkward and conceited.*

Lady Char. Mrs Kitty dances sweetly.

Phi. And sir Harry delightfully.

Duke. Well enough for a commoner.

Phi. Come, now to supper. A gentleman and a lady—here, fiddler—[*Gives money.*]—wait without.

Fid. Yes, an't please your honour.

[*Exit with a tankard.*

Phi. [*They sit down.*]—We will set the wine on the table——Here is claret, burgundy, and champagne, and a bottle of tokay for the ladies. There are tickets on every bottle—If any entleman chooses port———

Duke. 'Tis only fit for a dram.

Kit. Lady Bab, what shall I send you? Lady Charlotte, pray be free: the more free the more welcome, as they say in my country. The gentlemen will be so good as to take care of themselves. [*A pause.*

Duke. Lady Charlotte, hob or nob!

Lady Char. Done, my lord; in Burgundy, if you please.

Duke. Here's your sweetheart and mine, and the friends of the company.

[*They drink. A pause.*

Phi. Come, ladies and gentlemen, a bumper all round—I have a health for you—Here is to the amendment of our masters and mistresses.

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

[*Loud laugh. A pause.*

Kit. Ladies, pray what is your opinion of a single-gentleman's service?

Lady Char. Do you mean an old single-gentleman?

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! [*Loud laugh.*

Phi. My lord duke, your toast.

Duke. Lady Betty———

Phi. Oh no; a health and a sentiment.

Duke. A health and a sentiment! No, no; let us have a song. Sir Harry, your song—

Sir Har. Would you have it? Well, then—Mrs Kitty, we must call upon you. Will you honour my muse?

All. A song, a song! ay, ay; sir Harry's song! sir Harry's song!

Duke. A song, to be sure; but first, prelude—[*Kisses* KIT.]—Pray, gentlemen, put it about.

[*Kissing round—Kingston kisses Cloe heartily.*

Sir Har. See how the devils kiss!

Kit. I'm really hoarse; but—hem—I must clear up my pipes—hem—this is sir Harry's song: being a new song, intitled and called, *The Fellow Servant;* or, *All in a Livery.*—[*Sings.*]

Come here, fellow-servant, and listen to me,
I'll show you how those of superior degree
Are only dependents, no better than we.
Chorus. Both high and low in this do agree,
'Tis here, fellow-servant,
And there, fellow-servant,
And all in a livery.

See yonder fine spark, in embroidery drest,
Who bows to the great, and, if they smile, is blest.
What is he, i'faith, but a servant at best?
Cho. Both high, &c.

Nature made all alike, no distinction she craves;
So we laugh at the great world, its fo ls, and its knaves;
For we are all servants, but they are all slaves.
Chorus. Both high, &c.

The fat-shining glutton looks up to the shelf,
The wrinkled mean miser bows down to his pelf,
And the curl-pated beau is a slave to himself.
Chorus, Both high, &c.

The gay sparkling belle, who the whole town alarms,
And with eyes, lips, and neck, sets the smart all in arms,
Is a vassal herself, a mere drudge to her charms.
Chorus. Both high, &c.

Then we'll drink like our betters, and lau , sing, and love,
And when sick of one place, to another we'll move;
For, with little and great, the best joy is to rove.
Chorus. Both high and low in this do agree,
That 'tis here, fellow-servant,
And there, fellow-servant,
And all in a livery.

Phi. How do you like it, my lord duke?
Duke. It is a damned vile composition!
Phi. How so?
Duke. O very low! very low, indeed!
Sir Har. Can you make a better?
Duke. I hope so.
Sir Har. That is very conceited.
Duke. What is conceited, you scoundrel?
Sir Har. Scoundrel! You are a rascal; I'll pull you by the nose. [*All rise.*
Duke. Look'e, friend, don't give yourself airs, and make a disturbance among the ladies——If you are a gentleman, name your weapons.
Sir Har. Weapons! What you will——Pistols——
Duke. Done—behind Montague-house.
Sir Har. Done—with seconds!
Duke. Done!——
Phi. Oh, for shame, gentlemen! My lord duke—Sir Harry, the ladies! fy!
[DUKE *and* SIR HARRY *affect to sing.*
Phi. [*A violent knocking.*] What the devil can that be, Kitty?
Kit. Who can it possibly be?
Phi. Kingston, run up stairs and peep. [*Exit* KINGSTON.] It sounds like my master's rap——Pray Heaven, it is not he!

Enter KINGSTON.

Well, Kingston, what is it?
King. It is master and Mr Freeman—I peeped through the key-hole, and saw them by the lamp-light——Tom has just let them in——
Phi. The devil he has!——What can have brought him back?
Kit. No matter what——a ay w th the things!——
Phi. Away with the wine! Away with the plate! Here Coachman, Cook, Cloe, Kingston, bear a hand! out with the candles!——Away, away! [*They carry away the table, &c.*
Visitors. What shall we do? What shall we do?
[*They all run about in confusion.*
Kit. Run up stairs, ladies!
Phi. No, no, no! He'll see you, then—
Sir Har. What the devil had I to do here!
Duke. Pox take it, face it out.
Sir Har. O, no! these West Indians are very fiery.
Phi. I would not have him see any of you for the world.
Lovel. [*Without.*] Philip! Where's Philip?
Phi. Oh, the devil! he's certainly coming down stairs—Sir Harry, run down into the cellar. My lord duke, get into the pantry—Away, away!
Kit. No, no! do you put their ladyships into the pantry, and I'll take his grace into the coal-hole.
Visitors. Any where, any where—up the chimney, if you will!
Phi. There, in with you!
[*They all go into the pantry.*
Lovel. [*Without.*] Philip, Philip!——
Phi. Coming, sir! [*Aloud.*] Kitty, have you never a good book to be reading of?
Kit. Yes, here is one.
Phi. Egad, this is black Monday with us. Sit down—Seem to read your book——Here he is, as drunk as a piper——
[*They sit down.*

Enter LOVEL, *with pistols, affecting to be drunk;* FREEMAN *following.*

Lovel. Philip, the son of Alexander the Great, where are all my myrmidons? What the devil makes you up so early in the morning?
Phi. He is very drunk, indeed. [*Aside.*] Mrs Kitty and I had got into a good book, your honour.
Free. Ay, ay; they have been well employed, I dare say—ha, ha, ha!
Lovel. Come, sit down, Freeman; lie you there. [*Lays his pistols down.*] I come a little unexpectedly, perhaps, Philip?
Phi. A good servant is never afraid of being caught, sir.
Lovel. I have some accounts that I must settle——
Phi. Accounts, sir! To-night?
Love. Yes, to-night—I find myself perfectly

clear—You shall see I'll settle them in a twinkling.

Phi. Your honour will go into the parlour?

Lovel. No, I'll settle them all here———

Kit. Your honour must not sit here.

Lovel. Why not?

Kit. You will certainly take cold, sir; the room has not been washed above an hour.

Lovel. What a cursed lie that is! [*Aside.*

Duke. Philip, Philip, Philip!

[*Peeping out.*

Phil. Pox take you! hold your tongue—

[*Aside.*

Free. You have just nicked them in the very minute. [*Aside to* LOVEL.

Lovel. I find I have; mum. [*Aside to* FREEMAN.] Get some wine, Philip. [*Exit* PHILIP.] Though I must eat something before I drink; Kitty, what have you got in the pantry?

Kit. In the pantry? Lard, your honour! we are at board-wages———

Free. I could eat a morsel of cold meat.

Lovel. You shall have it———Here, [*Rises.*] Open the pantry door; I'll be about your board-wages! I have treated you often, now you shall treat your master———

Kit. If I may be believed, sir, there is not a scrap of any thing in the world in the pantry.

[*Opposing him.*

Lovel. Well, then, we must be contented, Freeman. Let us have a crust of bread and a bottle of wine. [*Sits down again.*

Kit. Sir, had not my master better go to bed!

[*Makes signs to* FREEMAN, *that* LOVEL *is drunk.*]

Lovel. Bed! not I——I'll sit here all night—'Tis very pleasant, and nothing like variety in life.

Sir Har. [*Peeping.*] Mrs Kitty———Mrs Kitty———

Kit. Peace, on your life! [*Aside.*

Lovel. Kitty, what voice is that?

Kit. Nobody's, sir. Hem———

Lovel. [PHILIP *brings wine.*] Soh——very well———Now, do you two march off——March off, I say———

Phi. We can't think of leaving your honour. For, egad, if we do, we are undone. [*Aside.*

Lovel. Begone—My service to you, Freeman. This is good stuff———

Free. Excellent.

[*Somebody in the pantry sneezes.*

Kit. We are undone! undone!

[*Aside.*

Phi. Oh, that is the duke's damned rapee!

[*Aside.*

Lovel. Did not you hear a noise, Charles?

Free. Somebody sneezed, I thought.

Lovel. Damn it, there are thieves in the house——I'll be among them.

[*Takes a pistol.*

Kit Lack-a-day, sir! it was only the cat; they sometimes sneeze for all the world, like a christian; here, Jack, Jack! he has got cold, sir——Puss—— Puss——

Lovel. A cold: then, I'll cure him. Here, Jack, Jack; Puss, Puss———

Kit. Your honour won't be so rash—Pray, your honour, don't——— [*Opposing.*

Lovel. Stand off! here, Freeman! here's a barrel for business, with a brace of slugs, and well-primed, as you see———Freeman, I'll hold you five to four; nay, I'll hold you two to one, I hit the cat through the key-hole of that pantry-door.

Free. Try, try; but I think it impossible.

Lovel. I am a damned good marksman.——[*Cocks the pistol, and points it to the pantry door.*] Now, for it! [*A violent shriek, and all is discovered.*] Who the devil are these?——One two—three—four———

Phi. They are particular friends of mine, sir; servants to some noblemen in the neighbourhood.

Lovel. I told you there were thieves in the house.

Free. Ha, ha, ha!

Phi. I assure your honour they have been entertained at our own expence, upon my word.

Kit. Yes, indeed, your honour, if it was the last word I had to speak.

Lovel. Take up that bottle. [PHILIP *takes up a bottle with a ticket to it, and is going off.*] Bring it back. Do you usually entertain your company with Tokay, Monsieur?

Phi. I, sir, treat with wine!

Lovel. O yes, from humble port to imperial Tokay, too. Yes, I loves Kokay.

[*Mimicking himself.*

Phi. How! Jemmy, my master!

Kit. Jemmy! the devil!

Phi. Your honour is at present in liquor; but, in the morning, when your honour is recovered, I will set all to rights again.

Lovel. [*Changing his countenance.*] We'll set all to rights, now—There, I am sober, at your service. What have you to say, Philip? [PHILIP *starts.*] You may well start—Go, get out of my sight!

Duke. Sir, I have not the honour to be known to you, but I have the honour to serve his grace the duke of———

Lovel. And the impudence, familiarly to assume his title? Your Grace will give me leave to tell you, that is the door; and, if you ever enter there again, I assure you, my lord duke, I will break every bone in your grace's skin!—Begone!——

Duke. [*Aside.*] Low-bred fellows!

[*Exit.*

Lovel. I beg your ladyship's pardon; perhaps, they can't go without chairs—ha, ha, ha!

Free. Ha, ha, ha! [SIR HARRY *steals off.*

Lady Char. This comes of visiting commoners. [*Exit.*

Lady Bab. They are downright Hottenpots. [*Exit.*

Phi. and Kit. I hope your honour will not take away our bread?

Lovel. Five hundred pounds will set you up in a chocolate-house. You'll shine in the bar, madam. I have been an eye-witness of your roguery, extravagance, and ingratitude.

Phi. and Kit. Oh, sir—Good sir!

Lovel. You, madam, may stay here till to-morrow morning—And there, madam, is the book you lent me, which I beg you'll read—night and morning before you say your prayers.

Kit. I am ruined and undone! [*Exit.*

Lovel. But you, sir, for your villainy, and (what I hate worse) your hypocrisy, shall not stay a minute longer in this house; and here comes an honest man to shew you the way out. Your keys, sir———

[PHILIP *gives the keys.*

Enter TOM.

Tom, I respect and value you; you are an honest servant, and shall never want encouragement—Be so good, Tom, as to see that gentleman out of my house, [*Points to* PHILIP.] and then take charge of the cellar and plate.

Tom. I thank your honour; but I would not rise on the ruin of a fellow-servant.

Lovel. No remonstrances, Tom; it shall be as I say.

Phi. What a cursed fool have I been! [*Exeunt Servants.*

Lovel. Well, Charles, I must thank you for my frolic: it has been a wholesome one to me; have I done right?

Free. Entirely: No judge could have determined better. As you punished the bad, it was but justice to reward the good.

Lovel. A faithful servant is a worthy character——

Free. And can never receive too much encouragement.

Lovel. Right!

Free. You have made Tom very happy.

Lovel. And I intend to make your Robert so, too. Every honest servant should be made happy.

Free. But what an insufferable piece of assurance is it in some of these fellows to affect and imitate their masters' manners?

Lovel. What manners must those be which they can imitate?

Free. True.

Lovel. If persons of rank would act up to their standard, it would be impossible that their servants could ape them; but when they affect every thing that is ridiculous, it will be in the power of any low creature to follow their example.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

MINOR.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

SIR WILLIAM WEALTHY, *father to* SIR GEORGE.
SHIFT, *a sharper.*
SMIRK, *an auctioneer.*
SIR GEORGE WEALTHY, *the Minor.*
LOADER, *a gamester.*
MR RICHARD WEALTHY, *uncle to* SIR GEORGE.
DICK, *servant to* SIR GEORGE.
TRANSFER, *a usurer.*

WOMEN.

LUCY, *daughter to* MR R. WEALTHY.
MRS COLE, *an old bawd.*

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I:

Enter SIR WILLIAM WEALTHY, *and* MR RICHARD WEALTHY.

Sir Wil. COME, come, brother; I know the world. People, who have their attention eternally fixed upon one object, can't help being a little narrow in their notions.

R. Weal. A sagacious remark that! and highly probable, that we merchants, who maintain a constant correspondence with the four quarters of the world, should know less of it than your fashionable fellows, whose whole experience is bounded by Westminster-bridge.

Sir Wil. Nay, brother, as a proof that I am not blind to the benefit of travelling, George, you know, has been in Germany these four years.

R. Weal. Where he is well grounded in gaming and gluttony: France has furnished him with fawning and flattery; Italy equipped him with capriols and cantatas; and, thus accomplished, my young gentleman is returned with a cargo of whores, cooks, valets de chambre, and fiddle-sticks, a most valuable member of the British commonwealth.

Sir Wil. You dislike, then, my system of education?

R. Weal. Most sincerely.

Sir Wil. The whole?

R. Weal. Every particular.

Sir Wil. The early part, I should imagine, might merit your approbation?

R. Weal. Least of all. What, I suppose, because he has run the gauntlet through a public school, where, at sixteen, he had practised more vices than he would otherwise have heard of at sixty!

Sir Wil. Ha, ha, prejudice!

R. Weal. Then, indeed, you removed him to

ersity; where, lest his morals should be
, and his understanding improved, you
t him free from the restraint of the one,
drudgery of the other, by the privileged
on of a silk gown and a velvet cap.
il. And all these evils, you think, a city
n would have prevented?
eal. Doubtless. Proverbs, proverbs,
William, convey wholesome instruction.
is the root of all evil. Regular hours,
employment, and good example, can't
rm the mind.
il. Why, truly, brother, had you stuck
ld civic vices, hypocrisy, cozenage, and
I don't know whether I might not have
d George to your care; but you cock-
v beat us suburbians at our own wea-
What, old boy! times are changed since
of thy indentures; when the sleek, crop-
entice used to dangle after his mistress,
great bible under his arm, to St Bride's
day; bring home the text, repeat the
of the discourse, dine at twelve, and re-
n a gaudy day, with buns and beer at
or Mile-end.
al. Wonderfully facetious!
il. Our modern lads are of a different
They have their gaming clubs in the gar-
r little lodgings, the snug depositaries of
y swords and occasional bag-wigs; their
r the turf; aye, and their commissions
uptcy too, before they are well out of
e.
al. Infamous aspersion!
il. But the last meeting at Newmarket,
y received at the hazard-table, the iden-
from the individual tailor to whom he
it but the day before for a new set of

al. Invention!
il. These are anecdotes you will never
h in your weekly travels from Cateaton-
your boarded box in Clapham, brother.
al. And yet that boarded box, as your
spendthrift proceeds, will soon be the
of the family.
il. May be not. Who knows what a re-
n our project may produce?
al. I do. None at all.
il. Why so?
al. Because your means are ill-propor-
their end. Were he my son, I would
——
il. As you have done your daughter.
him. But consider, I have but one.
al. That would weigh nothing with me:
Charlotte to set up a will of her own,
t the man of my choice, she must ex-
hare the fate of her sister. I consider
as a smaller kind of kingdoms, and
ave disobedience in the one as severely
punished as rebellion in the other. Both cut off from their respective societies.

Sir Wil. Poor Lucy! But surely you begin to relent. May not I intercede?

R. Weal. Look'e, brother, you know my mind. I will be absolute. If I meddle with the management of your son, it is at your own request; but if, directly or indirectly, you interfere with my banishment of that wilful, headstrong, disobedient hussy, all ties between us are broke; and I shall no more remember you as a brother, than I do her as a child.

Sir Wil. I have done. But to return. You think there is probability in my plan?

R. Weal. I shall attend the issue.

Sir Wil. You will lend your aid, however?

R. Weal. We shall see how you go on.

Enter Servant.

Ser. A letter, sir.

Sir Wil. Oh, from Capias, my attorney? Who brought it?

Ser. The person is without, sir.

Sir Wil. Bid him wait. [*Exit Servant.*

[*Reads.*

'Worthy Sir,

'The bearer is the person I promised to pro-
'cure. I thought it was proper for you to exa-
'mine him *viva voce*. So if you administer a few
'interrogatories, you will find, by cross-question-
'ing him, whether he is a competent person to
'prosecute the cause you wot of. I wish you a
'speedy issue; and as there can be no default in
'your judgment, am of opinion it should be car-
'ried into immediate execution. I am,

'Worthy Sir, &c.'

TIMOTHY CAPIAS.

'P. S. The party's name is Samuel Shift. He
'is an admirable mime, or mimic, and most delec-
'table company; as we experience every Tues-
'day night at our club, the Magpy and Horse-
'shoe, Fetter-lane.'

Very methodical indeed, Mr Capias!—John.

Enter Servant.

Bid the person who brought this letter walk in. [*Exit Servant.*] Have you any curiosity, brother?

R. Weal. Not a jot. I must to the 'Change. In the evening you may find me in the counting-house, or at Jonathan's. [*Exit* R. WEALTHY.

Sir Wil. You shall hear from me.

Enter SHIFT *and Servant.*

Shut the door, John, and remember, I am not at

home. [*Exit Servant.*] You came from Mr Capias?

Shift. I did, sir.

Sir Wil. Your name, I think, is Shift?

Shift. It is, sir.

Sir Wil. Did Mr Capias drop any hint of my business with you?

Shift. None. He only said, with his spectacles on his nose, and his hand upon his chin, sir William Wealthy is a respectable personage, and my client: he wants to retain you in a certain affair, and will open the case, and give you your brief himself: if you adhere to his instructions, and carry your cause, he is generous, and will discharge your bill without taxation.

Sir Wil. Ha, ha! my friend Capias to a hair! —Well, sir, this is no bad specimen of your abilities. But see that the door is fast. Now, sir, you are to—

Shift. A moment's pause, if you please. You must know, sir William, I am a prodigious admirer of forms. Now, Mr Capias tells me, that it is always the rule to administer a retaining fee before you enter upon the merits.

Sir Wil. Oh, sir, I beg your pardon!

Shift. Not that I questioned your generosity; but forms, you know—

Sir Wil. No apology, I beg. But as we are to have a closer connection, it may not be amiss, by way of introduction, to understand one another a little. Pray, sir, where was you born?

Shift. At my father's.

Sir Wil. Hum!—And what was he?

Shift. A gentleman.

Sir Wil. What was you bred?

Shift. A gentleman.

Sir Wil. How do you live?

Shift. Like a gentleman.

Sir Wil. Could nothing induce you to unbosom yourself?

Shift. Look'e, sir William, there is a kind of something in your countenance, a certain openness and generosity, a *je ne scai* in your manner, that, I will unlock:—You shall see me all.

Sir Wil. You will oblige me.

Shift. You must know, then, that fortune, which frequently delights to raise the noblest structures from the simplest foundations; who from a tailor made a pope, from a gin-shop an empress, and many a prime minister from nothing at all, has thought fit to raise me to my present height, from the humble employment of —Light your Honour—A link boy.

Sir Wil. A pleasant fellow! Who were your parents?

Shift. I was produced, sir, by a left-handed marriage; in the language of the newspapers, between an illustrious lamp-lighter and an itinerant cat and dog butcher. Cat's meat and dog's meat. I dare say, you have heard my mother, sir. But as to this happy pair I owe little besides my being, I shall drop them where they dropt me—in the street.

Sir Wil. Proceed.

Shift. My first knowledge of the world I owe to a school which has produced many a great man—the avenues of the playhouse. There, sir, leaning on my extinguished link, I learned dexterity from pick-pockets, connivance from constables, politics and fashions from footmen, and the art of making and breaking a promise from their masters. Here, sirrah, light me across the kennel. I hope your honour will remember poor Jack. You ragged rascal, I have no halfpence —I'll pay you the next time I see you.—But, lack-a-day, sir, that time I saw as seldom as his tradesmen.

Sir Wil. Very well.

Shift. To these accomplishments from without the theatre, I must add one that I obtained within.

Sir Wil. How did you gain admittance there?

Shift. My merit, sir, that, like my link, threw a radiance round me. A detachment from the head-quarters here took possession, in the summer, of a country corporation, where I did the honours of the barn, by sweeping the stage and clipping the candles. There my skill and address were so conspicuous, that it procured me the same office, the ensuing winter, at Drury-lane, where I acquired intrepidity, the crown of all my virtues.

Sir Wil. How did you obtain that?

Shift. By my post. For, I think, sir, he that dares stand the shot of the gallery, in lighting, snuffing, and sweeping, the first night of a new play, may bid defiance to the pillory, with all its customary compliments.

Sir Wil. Some truth in that.

Shift. But an unlucky crab-apple, applied to my right eye by a patriot gingerbread baker from the Borough, who would not suffer three dancers from Switzerland, because he hated the French, forced me to a precipitate retreat.

Sir Wil. Poor devil!

Shift. Broglio and Contades have done the same. But, as it happened, like a tennis-ball, I rose higher from the rebound.

Sir Wil. How so?

Shift. My misfortune, sir, moved the compassion of one of our performers, a whim-ical man; he took me into his service. To him I owe, what, I believe, will make me useful to you.

Sir Wil. Explain.

Shift. Why, sir, my master was remarkable happy in an art, which, however disesteemed at present, is, by Tully, reckoned amongst the perfections of an orator; mimickry.

Sir Wil. Why, you are deeply read, Mr Shift!

Shift. A smattering—but as I was saying, sir,

nothing came amiss to my master: Bipeds or quadrupeds; rationals or animals; from the clamour of the bar to the cackle of the barn-door; from the soporific twang of the tabernacle of Tottenham-court to the melodious bray of their long-eared brethren in Bunhill-fields; all were objects of his imitation and my attention. In a word, sir, for two whole years, under this professor, I studied and starved, impoverished my body, and pampered my mind; till, thinking myself pretty near equal to my master, I made him one of his own bows, and set up for myself.

Sir Wil. You have been successful, I hope?

Shift. Pretty well. I cannot complain. My art, sir, is a *passe-par-tout*. I seldom want employment. Let's see how stand my engagements. [*Pulls out a pocket-book.*] Hum—hum—Oh! Wednesday at Mrs Gammut's near Hanover-square. There, there, I shall make a meal upon the Mingotti; for her ladyship is in the opera interest; but, however, I shall revenge her cause upon her rival Mattei. Sunday evening at lady Sostenuto's concert. Thursday I dine upon the actors, with ten Templars, at the Mitre, in Fleet-street. Friday I am to give the amorous parley of two intriguing cats in a gutter, with the disturbing of a hen-roost, at Mr Deputy Sugarsop's, near the Monument. So, sir, you see my hands are full. In short, sir William, there is not a buck or a turtle devoured within the bills of mortality, but there I may, if I please, stick a napkin under my chin.

Sir Wil. I'm afraid, Mr Shift, I must break in a little upon your engagements; but you shall be no loser by the bargain.

Shift. Command me.

Sir Wil. You can be secret as well as serviceable?

Shift. Mute as a mackarel.

Sir Wil. Come hither, then. If you betray me to my son———

Shift. Scalp me.

Sir Wil. Enough.—You must know, then, the hopes of our family are, Mr Shift, centered in one boy.

Shift. And I warrant he is a hopeful one?

Sir Wil. No interruption, I beg. George has been abroad these four years; and, from his late behaviour, I have reason to believe, that, had a certain event happened, which I'm afraid he wished—my death—

Shift. Yes; that's natural enough.

Sir Wil. Nay, pray,—there would soon be an end to an ancient and honourable family.

Shift. Very melancholy, indeed. But families, like besoms, will wear to the stumps, and finally fret out, as you say.

Sir Wil. Prithee, peace for five minutes!

Shift. I am tongue-ty'd.

Sir Wil. Now I have projected a scheme to prevent this calamity.

Shift. Ay, I should be glad to hear that.

Sir Wil. I am going to tell it you.

Shift. Proceed.

Sir Wil. George, as I have contrived it, shall experience all the miseries of real ruin, without running the least risk.

Shift. Ay, that will be a *coup de maitre*.

Sir Wil. I have prevailed upon his uncle, a wealthy citizen—

Shift. I don't like a city plot.

Sir Wil. I tell thee it is my own.

Shift. I beg pardon.

Sir Wil. My brother, I say, some time since wrote him a circumstantial account of my death; upon which he is returned, in full expectation of succeeding to my estate.

Shift. Immediately?

Sir Wil. No; when at age. In about three months.

Shift. I understand you.

Sir Wil. Now, sir, guessing into what hands my heedless boy would naturally fall on his return, I have, in a feigned character, associated myself with a set of rascals, who will spread every bait that can flatter folly, inflame extravagance, allure inexperience, or catch credulity. And when, by their means, he thinks himself reduced to the last extremity, lost even to the most distant hope—

Shift. What then?

Sir Wil. Then, will I step in, like his guardian-angel, and snatch him from perdition. If, mortified by misery, he becomes conscious of his errors, I have saved my son; but if, on the other hand, gratitude can't bind, nor ruin reclaim him, I will cast him out, as an alien to my blood, and trust for the support of my name and family to a remoter branch.

Shift. Bravely resolved! But what part am I to sustain in this drama?

Sir Wil. Why, George, you are to know, is already stript of what money he could command by two sharpers: but as I never trust them out of my sight, they can't deceive me.

Shift. Out of your sight!

Sir Wil. Why, I tell thee, I am one of the knot: an adept in their science; can slip, shuffle, cog, or cut with the best of them.

Shift. How do you escape your son's notice?

Sir Wil. His firm persuasion of my death, with the extravagance of my disguise. Why, I would engage to elude your penetration, when I am beaued out for the baron. But of that by and by. He has recourse, after his ill success, to the ten per cent gentry, the usurers, for a farther supply.

Shift. Natural enough.

Sir Wil. Pray, do you know, I forgot his name, a wrinkled old fellow, in a thread-bare coat? He sits every morning, from twelve till two, in the left corner of Lloyd's coffee-house; and every

evening, from five till eight, under the clock, at the Temple Exchange.

Shift. What, little Transfer, the broker?

Sir Wil. The same. Do you know him?

Shift. Know him! Aye, rot him! It was but last Easter Tuesday he had me turned out, at a feast in Leather-seller's-hall, for singing *Room for cuckolds*, like a parrot; and vowed it meant a reflection upon the whole body corporate.

Sir Wil. You have reason to remember him.

Shift. Yes, yes, I recommended a minor to him myself, for the loan only of fifty pounds; and, would you believe it, as I hope to be saved, we dined, supped, and wetted five and thirty guineas upon tick, in meetings at the Cross Keys, in order to settle the terms; and, after all, the scoundrel would not lend us a stiver.

Sir Wil. Could you personate him?

Shift. Him! Oh, you shall see me shift into his shamble in a minute, and with a withered face, a bit of a purple nose, a cautionary stammer, and a sleek silver head, I would undertake to deceive even his banker. But, to speak the truth, I have a friend that can do this inimitably well. Have not you something of more consequence for me?

Sir Wil. I have. Could not you, master Shift, assume another shape? You have attended auctions?

Shift. Auctions! a constant puff. Deep in the mystery; a professed connoiseur, from a Niger to a Nautilus; from the Apollo Belvidere to a butterfly.

Sir Wil. One of these insinuating oily orators I will get you to personate; for we must have the plate and jewels in our possession, or they will soon fall into other hands.

Shift. I will do it.

Sir Wil. Within I'll give you farther instructions.

Shift. I'll follow you.

Sir Wil. [*Going, returns.*] You will will want materials.

Shift. Oh, my dress I can be furnished with in five minutes. [*Exit* SIR WILLIAM.] A whimsical old blade this! I shall laugh if this scheme miscarries. I have a strange mind to lend it a lift: never had a greater. Pho, a damned unnatural connection this of mine! What have I to do with fathers and guardians! a parcel of preaching, prudent, careful, curmudgeonly—dead to pleasures themselves, and the blasters of it in others. Mere dogs in a manger———No, no; I'll veer, tack about, open my budget to the boy, join in a counter-plot. But, hold, hold, hold, friend Stephen! see, first, how the land lies.—Who knows whether this Germanized genius has parts to comprehend, or spirit to reward, thy merit. There's danger in that; ay, marry is there. 'Egad, before I shift the helm, I'll first examine the coast; and, then, if there be but a bold shore and a good bottom—have a care, old Square Toes, you will meet with your match.

[*Exit.*

Enter SIR GEORGE, LOADER, *and Servant.*

Sir Geo. Let the martin pannels for the vis-a-vis be carried to Long-acre, and the pye-balls sent to Hall's to be bitted. You will give me leave to be in your debt till the evening, Mr Loader. I have just enough to discharge the baron; and we must, you know, be punctual with him, for the credit of the country.

Load. Fire him, a snub-nosed son of a bitch! Levant me, but he got enough last night to purchase a principality amongst his countrymen, the Highdutchians and Hussarians.

Sir Geo. You had your share, Mr Loader.

Load. Who, I? Lurch me at four, but I was marked to the top of your trick by the baron, my dear. What, I am no cinque and quatre man. Come, shall we have a dip in the history of the Four Kings this morning?

Sir Geo. Rather too early. Besides, it is the rule abroad, never to engage afresh till our old scores are discharged.

Load. Capot me, but those lads abroad are pretty fellows, let them say what they will. Here, sir, they will vowel you, from father to son, to the twentieth generation. They would as soon now-a-days pay a tradesman's bill as a play-debt.—All sense of honour is gone; not a stiver stirring. They could as soon raise the dead as two pounds two. Nick me, but I have a great mind to tie up, and ruin the rascals. What, has Transfer been here this morning?

Enter DICK.

Sir Geo. Any body here this morning, Dick?

Dick. Nobody, your honour.

Load. Repique the rascal! He promised to be here before me.

Dick. I beg your honour's pardon. Mrs Cole from the Piazza was here between seven and eight.

Sir Geo. An early hour for a lady of her calling.

Dick. Mercy on me! the poor gentlewoman is mortally altered since we used to lodge there, in our jaunts from Oxford; wrapt up in flannels; all over the rheumatiss.

Load. Ay, ay, old Moll is at her last stake.

Dick. She bid me say, she just stopt in her way to the Tabernacle; after the exhortation, she says, she'll call again.

Sir Geo. Exhortation! Oh, I recollect. Well, whilst they only make proselytes from that profession, they are heartily welcome to them. She does not mean to make me a convert?

Dick. I believe she has some such design up-

on me; for she offered me a book of hymns, a shilling, and a dram to go along with her.

Sir Geo. No bad scheme, Dick. Thou hast a fine, sober, psalm-singing countenance——and when thou hast been some time in their trammels, may'st make as able a teacher as the best of them.

Dick. Laud, sir, I want learning!

Sir Geo. Oh, the spirit, the spirit, will supply all that, Dick; never fear.

Enter SIR WILLIAM, *as a German baron.*

My dear baron, what news from the Haymarket? What says the Floreuza? Does she yield? Shall I be happy? Say yes, and command my fortune.

Sir Wil. I was never did see so fine a woman since I was leave Hamburgh; dere was all de colour, all red and white, dat was quite natural; point d'artifice. Then she was dance and sing——I vow to Heaven, I was never see de like!

Sir Geo. But how did she receive my embassy? What hopes?

Sir Wil. Why dere was, Monsieur le Chevalier, when I first enter, dree or four damned queer people; ah, ah, dought I, by Gad, I guess your business! Dere was one fat big womans, dat I know long time: le valet de chambre was tell me that she came from a grand merchand; ha, ha, dought I, by your leave, stick to your shop; or, if you must have de pretty girl, dere is de play-hous, dat do very well for you; but for de opera, pardonnez, by Gar, dat is meat for your master.

Sir Geo. Insolent mechanic! But she despised him?

Sir Wil. Ah, ma foy, he is damned rich, has beaucoup de guineas; but after de fat woman was go, I was tell the Signora, madam, der is one certain chevalier of dis country, who has travelled, see de world, bien fait, well made, beaucoup d'esprit, a great deal of monies, who beg, by Gar, to have de honour to drow himself at your feet.

Sir Geo. Well, well, baron.

Sir Wil. She aska your name: as soon as I tell her, aha, by Gar, dans an instant she melt like de lump of sugar! she run to her beaureau, and, in de minute, return wid de paper.

Sir Geo. Give it me.—'Les preliminarie d'-'une traite entre le chevalier Wealthy and la 'Signora Diamenti.' A bagatelle, a trifle: she shall have it.

Load. Harke, knight, what is all that there outlandish stuff?

Sir Geo. Read, read! the eloquence of angels, my dear baron!

Load. Slam me, but the man's mad! I don't understand their gibberish. What is it in English?

Sir Geo. The preliminaries of a subsidy treaty between sir G. Wealthy and signora Florenza; that the said signora will resign the possession of her person to the said sir George, on the payment of three hundred guineas monthly, for equipage, table, domestics, dress, dogs, and diamonds; her debts to be duly discharged, and a note advanced of five hundred by way of entrance.

Load. Zounds, what a cormorant! She must be devilish handsome!

Sir Geo. I am told so.

Load. Told so! Why did you never see her?

Sir Geo. No; and possibly never may, but from my box at the opera.

Load. Hey-day! Why, what the devil——

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, you stare! I don't wonder at it. This is an elegant refinement, unknown to the gross voluptuaries of this part of the world. This is, Mr Loader, what may be called a debt to your dignity: for an opera girl is as essential a piece of equipage for a man of fashion as his coach.

Load. The devil!

Sir Geo. 'Tis for the vulgar only to enjoy what they possess: the distinction of ranks and conditions are, to have hounds, and never hunt; cooks, and dine at taverns; houses, you never inhabit; mistresses, you never enjoy——

Load. And debts you never pay. Egad, I am not surprised at it; if this be your trade, no wonder that you want money for necessaries, when you give such a damned deal for nothing at all.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Mrs Cole, to wait upon your honour.

Sir Geo. My dear baron, run, dispatch my affair, conclude my treaty, and thank her for the very reasonable conditions.

Sir Wil. I sall.

Sir Geo. Mr Loader, shall I trouble you to introduce the lady? she is, I think, your acquaintance.

Load. Who, old Moll? Ay, ay, she is your market-woman. I would not give sixpence for your signoras. One armful of good wholesome British beauty is worth a ship load of their trapsing, tawdry trollops. But, hark'e, baron, how much for the table? Why, she must have a devilish large family, or a monstrous stomach.

Sir Wil. Ay, ay; dere is her moder, la complaisante to walk in de park, and to go to de play; two broders, deux valets, dree Spanish lapdogs, and de monkey.

Load. Strip me if I would set five shillings against the whole gang. May my partner renounce, with the game in his hand, if I were you, knight, if I would not——

Sir Geo. But the lady waits.—[*Exit* LOAD.]—A strange fellow this! What a whimsical jar-

gon he talks! Not an idea abstracted from play. To say truth, I am sincerely sick of my acquaintance: but, however, I have the first people in the kingdom to keep me in countenance. Death and the dice level all distinctions.

Enter MRS COLE, *supported by* LOADER *and* DICK.

Mrs Cole. Gently, gently, good Mr Loader.

Load. Come along, old Moll! Why, you jade, you look as rosy this morning—I must have a smack at your muns. Here, taste her, she is as good as old hock to get you a stomach

Mrs Cole. Fie, Mr Loader! I thought you had forgot me.

Load. I forget you! I would as soon forget what is trumps.

Mrs Cole. Softly, softly, young man! There, there, mighty well. And how does your honour do? I han't seen your honour the——Oh! mercy on me, there's a twinge————

Sir Geo. What's the matter, Mrs Cole?

Mrs Cole. My old disorder, the rheumatise; I han't been able to get a wink of————O la! What, you have been in town these two days?

Sir Geo. Since Wednesday.

Mrs Cole. And never once called upon old Cole? No, no, I am worn out, thrown by, and forgotten, like a tattered garment, as Mr Squintum says. Oh, he is a dear man! But for him, I had been a lost sheep; never known the comforts of the new birth; no.—There's your old friend Kitty Carrot at home still. What, shall we see you this evening? I have kept the green room for you ever since I heard you were in town.

Load. What, shall we take a snap at old Moll's? Hey, beldam, have you a good batch of burgundy abroach?

Mrs Cole. Bright as a ruby; and for flavour! You know the colonel? He and Jenny Cummins drank three flasks, hand to fist, last night.

Load. What, and bilk thee of thy share?

Mrs Cole. Ah, don't mention it, Mr Loader. No, that's all over with me. The time has been, when I could have earned thirty shillings a-day by my own drinking, and the next morning was neither sick nor sorry: but now, O laud! a thimble-full turns me topsy-turvy.

Load. Poor old girl!

Mrs Cole. Ay, I have done with these idle vanities; my thoughts are fixed upon a better place. What, I suppose, Mr Loader, you will be for your old friend, the black-eyed girl, from Rosemary-lane. Ha, ha! well, 'tis a merry little tit. A thousand pities she's such a reprobate! But she'll mend; her time is not come: all shall have their call, as Mr Squintum says, sooner or later; regeneration is not the work of a day. No, no, no! Oh!

Sir Geo. Not worse, I hope?

Mrs Cole. Rack, rack, gnaw, gnaw! never easy, a-bed or up, all's one. Pray, honest friend, have you any clary or mint-water in the house?

Dick. A case of French drams.

Mrs Cole. Heaven defend me! I would not touch a dram for the world.

Sir Geo. They are but cordials, Mrs Cole.—Fetch them, you blockhead!

[*Exit* DICK.

Mrs Cole. Ay, I am going; a-wasting, and a-wasting, sir George. What will become of the house when I am gone, Heaven knows! No.—When people are missed, then they are mourned. Sixteen years have I lived in the garden, comfortably and creditably; and, though I say it, could have got bail any hour of the day: Reputable tradesmen, sir George, neighbours, Mr Loader knows; no knock me-down doings in my house. A set of regular, sedate, sober customers. No rioters. Sixteen, did I say? ay, eighteen years have I paid scot and lot in the parish of St Paul's; and, during the whole time, nobody have said, Mrs Cole, why do you so? Unless twice that I was before sir Thomas de Val, and three times in the round-house.

Sir Geo. Nay, don't weep, Mrs Cole.

Load. May I lose deal, with an honour at bottom, if old Moll does not bring tears into my eyes.

Mrs Cole. However, it is a comfort, after all, to think one has passed through the world with credit and character. Ay, a good name, as Mr Squintum says, is better than a gallipot of ointment.

Enter DICK, *with a dram.*

Load. Come, haste, Dick, haste; sorrow is dry. Here, Moll, shall I fill thee a bumper?

Mrs Cole. Hold, hold, Mr Loader! Heaven help you, I could as soon swallow the Thames! Only a sip to keep the gout out of my stomach.

Load. Why, then, here's to thee. Levant me, but it is supernaculum! Speak when you have enough.

Mrs Cole. I won't trouble you for the glass; my hands do so tremble and shake, I shall but spill the good creature.

Load. Well pulled! But now to business.—Prithee, Moll, did not I see a tight young wench, in a linen gown, knock at your door this morning?

Mrs Cole. Ay; a young thing from the country.

Load. Could we not get a peep at her this evening?

Mrs Cole. Impossible! She is engaged to sir Timothy Trotter. I have taken earnest for her this three months.

Load. Pho, what signifies such a fellow as that! Tip him an old trader, and give her to the knight.

Mrs Cole. Tip him an old trader! Mercy on us, where do you expect to go when you die, Mr Loader?

Load. Crop me, but this Squintum has turned her brains!

Sir Geo. Nay, Mr Loader, I think the gentleman has wrought a most happy reformation.

Mrs Cole. Oh, it was a wonderful work.—There had I been tossing in a sea of sin, without rudder or compass. And had not the good gentleman pilotted me into the harbour of grace, I must have struck against the rocks of reprobation, and have been quite swallowed up in the whirlpool of despair. He was the precious instrument of my spiritual sprinkling. But, however, sir George, if your mind be set upon a young country thing, to-morrow night, I believe I can furnish you.

Load. As how?

Mrs Cole. I have advertised this morning in the register office, for servants under seventeen; and ten to one but I light on something that will do.

Load. Pillory me, but it has a face!

Mrs Cole. Truly, consistently with my conscience, I would do any thing for your honour.

Sir Geo. Right, Mrs Cole, never lose sight of that monitor. But, pray, how long has this heavenly change been wrought in you?

Mrs Cole. Ever since my last visitation of the gout. Upon my first fit, seven years ago, I began to have my doubts, and my waverings; but I was lost in a labyrinth, and nobody to show me the road. One time I thought of dying a Roman, which is truly a comfortable communion enough for one of us: but it would not do.

Sir Geo. Why not?

Mrs Cole. I went one summer over to Boulogne to repent; and, would you believe it, the bare-footed, bald-pated beggars, would not give me absolution without I quitted my business—Did you ever hear of such a set of scabby—besides, I could not bear their barbarity. Would you believe it, Mr Loader, they lock up for their lives, in a nunnery, the prettiest, sweetest, tender, young things! oh, six of them, for a season, would finish my business here, and then I should have nothing to do but to think of hereafter.

Load. Brand me, what a country!

Sir Geo. Oh, scandalous!

Mrs Cole. O no, it would not do. So, in my last illness, I was wished to Mr Squintum; who stept in with his saving grace, got me with the new-birth, and I became, as you see, regenerate, and another creature.

Enter DICK.

Dick. Mr Transfer, sir, has sent to know if your honour be at home.

Sir Geo. Mrs Cole, I am mortified to part with you. But business, you know———

Mrs Cole. True, sir George. Mr Loader, your arm—Gently, oh, oh!

Sir Geo. Would you take another thimbleful, Mrs Cole?

Mrs Cole. Not a drop; I shall see you this evening?

Sir Geo. Depend upon me.

Mrs Cole. To-morrow I hope to suit you——We are to have, at the tabernacle, an occasional hymn, with a thanksgiving sermon for my recovery. After which, I shall call at the register-office, and see what goods my advertisement has brought in.

Sir Geo. Extremely obliged to you, Mrs Cole.

Mrs Cole. Or, if that should not do, I have a tit-bit at home will suit your stomach. Never brushed by a beard. Well, Heaven bless you—Softly, have a care, Mr Loader—Richard, you may as well give me the bottle into the chair, for fear I should be taken ill on the road. Gently—So, so!

[*Exeunt* MRS COLE *and* LOAD.

Sir Geo. Dick, now show Mr Transfer in—ha, ha! what a hodge podge! How the jade has jumbled together the carnal and the spiritual! With what ease she reconciles her new birth to her old calling! No wonder these preachers have plenty of proselytes, whilst they have the address so comfortably to blend the hitherto jarring interests of the two worlds. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter DICK, *introducing* TRANSFER.

Dick. My master will come to you presently. [*Exit* DICK.

Enter SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. Mr Transfer, your servant.

Trans. Your honour's very humble. I thought to have found Mr Loader here.

Sir Geo. He will return immediately. Well, Mr Transfer—but take a chair—you have had a long walk. Mr Loader, I presume, opened to you the urgency of my business?

Trans. Ay, ay; the general cry, money, money! I don't know, for my part, where all the money is flown to. Formerly a note, with a tolerable indorsement, was as current as cash. If your uncle Richard, now, would join in this security———

Sir Geo. Impossible.

Trans. Ay, like enough. I wish you were of age.

Sir Geo. So do I. But as that will be considered in the premium——

Trans. True, true; I see you understand business—And what sum does your honour lack at present?

Sir Geo. Lack! how much have you brought?

Trans. Who, I? dear me, none!

Sir Geo. Zounds, none!

Trans. Lack-a-day, none to be had, I think. All the morning have I been upon the hunt.—There, Ephraim Barebones, the tallow-chandler in Thames-street, used to be a never-failing chap; not a guinea to be got there. Then I tottered away to Nebuchadnezzar Zebulon, in the Old Jewry, but it happened to be Saturday; and they never touch on the Sabbath, you know.

Sir Geo. Why, what the the devil can I do?

Trans. Good me, I did not know your honour had been so pressed.

Sir Geo. My honour pressed! Yes, my honour is not only pressed, but ruined, unless I can raise money to redeem it. That blockhead, Loader, to depend upon this old, doating——

Trans. Well, well, now I declare I am quite sorry to see your honour in such a taking.

Sir Geo. Damn your sorrow!

Trans. But come, don't be cast down: though money is not to he had, money's worth may, and that's the same thing.

Sir Geo. How, dear Transfer?

Trans. Why, I have, at my warehouse in the city, ten casks of whale-blubber, a large cargo of Dantzic dowlas, with a curious sortment of Birmingham hafts, and Whitney-blankets for exportation.

Sir Geo. Hey!

Trans. And stay, stay; then, again, at my country-house, the bottom of Gray's-inn-lane, there's a hundred ton of fine old hay, only damaged a little last winter for want of thatching; with forty load of flint-stones.

Sir Geo. Well.

Trans. Your honour may have all these for a reasonable profit, and convert them into cash.

Sir Geo. Blubber and blankets! Why, you old rascal, do you banter me?

Trans. Who, I? O la! marry, heaven forbid!

Sir Geo. Get out of my——you stuttering scoundrel!

Trans. If your honour would but hear me—

Sir Geo. Troop, I say, unless you have a mind to go a shorter way than you came.——[*Exit* TRANS.]—And yet there is something so uncommonly ridiculous in his proposal, that, were my mind more at ease———

Enter LOADER.

So, sir, you have recommended me to a fine fellow?

Lord. What's the matter?

Sir Geo. He can't supply me with a shilling! and wants, besides, to make me a dealer in dowlass.

Load. Ay, and a very good commodity, too.—People that are upon ways and means must not be nice, knight. A pretty piece of work you have made here! Thrown up the cards with the game in your hands.

Sir Geo. Why, prithee, of what use would his———

Load. Use! of every use. Procure you the spankers, my boy. I have a broker, that, in a twinkling, shall take off your bargain.

Sir Geo. Indeed!

Load. Indeed! ay, indeed. You sit down to hazard, and not know the chances! I'll call him back. Hollo, Transfer! A pretty, little, busy, bustling———You may travel miles before you will meet with his match. If there is one pound in the city, he will get it. He creeps, like a ferret, into their bags, and makes the yellow-boys bolt again.

Enter TRANSFER.

Come hither, little Transfer; what, man, our minor was a little too hasty; he did not understand trap: knows nothing of the game, my dear.

Trans. What I said was to serve sir George, as he seemed——

Load. I told him so. Well, well, we will take thy commodities, were they as many more. But try, prithee, if thou couldst not procure us some of the ready for present spending.

Trans. Let me consider.

Load. Ay, do: come, shuffle thy brains; never fear the baronet. To let a lord of lands want shiners; 'tis a shame!

Trans. I do recollect, in this quarter of the town, an old friend that used to do things in this way.

Load. Who?

Trans. Statute the scrivener.

Load. Slam me, but he has nicked the chance!

Trans. A hard man, master Loader.

Sir Geo. No matter.

Trans. His demands are exorbitant.

Sir Geo. That is no fault of ours.

Load. Well said, knight!

Trans. But, to save time, I had better mention his terms?

Load. Unnecessary.

Trans. Five per cent. legal interest.

Sir Geo. He shall have it.

Trans. Ten, the premium.

Sir Geo. No more words.

Trans. Then, as you are not of age, five more for insuring your life.

Load. We will give it.

Trans. As for what he will demand for the risk——

Sir Geo. He shall be satisfied.

Trans. You pay the attorney?

Sir Geo. Amply, amply! Loader, dispatch him.

Load. There, there, little Transfer; now, every thing is settled. All terms shall be complied with, reasonable or unreasonable. What! our principal is a man of honour! [*Exit* TRANSFER.] Hey, my knight, this is doing business. This pinch is a sure card.

Re-enter TRANSFER.

Trans. I had forgot one thing. I am not the principal; you pay the brokerage.

Load. Ay, ay; and a handsome present into the bargain, never fear.

Trans. Enough, enough.

Load. Hark'e, Transfer, we'll take the Birmingham hafts and Whitney wares.

Trans. They shall be forthcoming. You would not have the hay and the flints?

Load. Every pebble of them. The magistrates of the baronet's borough are infirm and gouty. He shall deal them as new pavement. [*Exit* TRANSFER.] So, that's settled. I believe, knight, I can lend you a helping hand as to the last article. I know some traders that will truck: fellows with finery. Not commodities of such clumsy conveyance as old Transfer's.

Sir Geo. You are very obliging.

Load. I'll do it, boy; and get you into the bargain a bonny auctioneer, that shall dispose of them all in a crack. [*Exit.*

Enter DICK.

Dick. Your uncle, sir, has been waiting some time.

Sir Geo. He comes in a lucky hour. Show him in. [*Exit* DICK.] Now for a lecture. My situation shan't sink my spirits, however. Here comes the musty trader, running over with remonstrances. I must banter the cit.

Enter RICHARD WEALTHY.

R. Weal. So, sir; what, I suppose this is a spice of your foreign breeding, to let your uncle kick his heels in your hall, whilst your presence-chamber is crowded with pimps, bawds, and gamesters?

Sir Geo. Oh, a proof of my respect, dear uncle! Would it have been decent now, uncle, to have introduced you into such company?

R. Weal. Wonderfully considerate! Well, young man, and what do you think will be the end of all this? Here I have received by the last mail a quire of your drafts from abroad. I see you are determined our neighbours should taste of your magnificence.

Sir Geo. Yes, I think I did some credit to my country.

R. Weal. And how are all these to be paid?

Sir Geo. That I submit to you, dear uncle.

R. Weal. From me!—Not a sous to keep you from the counter.

Sir Geo. Why, then, let the scoundrels stay. It is their duty. I have other demands, debts of honour, which must be discharged.

R. Weal. Here's a diabolical distinction!—Here's a prostitution of words!——Honour! 'Sdeath, that a rascal, who has picked your pocket, shall have his crime gilded with the most sacred distinction, and his plunder punctually paid, whilst the industrious mechanic, who ministers to your very wants, shall have his debt delayed, and his demand treated as insolent!

Sir Geo. Oh! a truce to this thread-bare trumpery, dear uncle!

R. Weal. I confess my folly; but make yourself easy; you won't be troubled with many more of my visits. I own I was weak enough to design a short expostulation with you; but as we in the city know the true value of time, I shall take care not to squander away any more of it upon you.

Sir Geo. A prudent resolution.

R. Weal. One commission, however, I can't dispense with myself from executing: It was agreed between your father and me, that as he had but one son, and I one daughter——

Sir Geo. Your gettings should be added to his estate, and my cousin Margery and I squat down together in the comfortable state of matrimony.

R. Weal. Puppy! Such was our intention. Now, his last will claims this contract.

Sir Geo. Dispatch, dear uncle!

R. Weal. Why then, in a word, see me here demand the execution.

Sir Geo. What d'ye mean? For me to marry Margery?

R. Weal. I do.

Sir Geo. What, moi—me!

R. Weal. You, you—Your answer, ay or no?

Sir Geo. Why then, concisely and briefly, without evasion, equivocation, or further circumlocution—No!

R. Weal. I am glad of it.

Sir Geo. So am I.

R. Weal. But pray, if it would not be too great a favour, what objections can you have to my daughter? Not that I want to remove them, but merely out of curiosity, What objections?

Sir Geo. None. I neither know her, have seen her, inquired after her, or ever intend it.

R. Weal. What, perhaps I am the stumbling block?

Sir Geo. You have hit it.

R. Weal. Ay, now we come to the point. Well, and pray——

Sir Geo. Why, it is not so much a dislike to your person, though that is exceptionable enough; but your profession, dear uncle, is an insuperable obstacle.

R. Weal. Good lack! And what harm has that done, pray?

Sir Geo. Done! so stained, polluted, and

tainted the whole mass of your blood, thrown such a blot on your 'scutcheons, as ten regular successions can hardly efface.

R. Weal. The deuce!

Sir Geo. And could you now, consistently with your duty as a faithful guardian, recommend my union with the daughter of a trader?

R. Weal. Why, indeed, I ask pardon; I am afraid I did not weigh the matter as maturely as I ought.

Sir Geo. Oh, a horrid, barbarous scheme!

R. Weal. But then, I thought her having the honour to partake of the same flesh and blood with yourself might prove, in some measure, a kind of fullers-earth, to scour out the dirty spots contracted by commerce.

Sir Geo. Impossible!

R. Weal. Besides, here, it has been the practice even of peers.

Sir Geo. Don't mention the unnatural intercourse! Thank Heaven, Mr Richard Wealthy, my education has been in another country, where I have been too well instructed in the value of nobility to think of intermixing it with the offspring of a Bourgeois. Why, what apology could I make to my children for giving them such a mother?

R. Weal. I did not think of that. Then I must despair, I am afraid?

Sir Geo. I can afford but little hopes. Though, upon recollection—Is the grisette pretty?

R. Weal. A parent may be partial. She is thought so.

Sir Geo. *Ah, la jolie petite bourgeoise!* Poor girl! I sincerely pity her. And I suppose, to procure her emersion from the mercantile mud, no consideration would be spared?

R. Weal. Why, to be sure, for such an honour one would strain a point.

Sir Geo. Why, then, not totally to destroy your hopes, I do recollect an edict in favour of Britanny, that when a man of distinction engages in commerce, his nobility is suffered to sleep.

R. Weal. Indeed!

Sir Geo. And, upon his quitting the contagious connection, he is permitted to resume his rank.

R. Weal. That's fortunate.

Sir Geo. So, nuncle Richard, if you will sell out of the stocks, shut up your counting-house, and quit St Mary-axe for Grosvenor-square——

R. Weal. What then?

Sir Geo. Why, when your rank has had time to rouse itself, for I think your nobility, nuncle, has had a pretty long nap—if the girl's person is pleasing, and the purchase-money is adequate to the honour, I may in time be prevailed upon to restore her to the rights of her family.

R. Weal. Amazing condescension!

Sir Geo. Good-nature is my foible. But, upon my soul, I would not have gone so far for any body else.

R. Weal. I can contain no longer! Hear me, spendthrift, prodigal! do you know, that in ten days your whole revenue won't purchase you a feather to adorn your empty head?

Sir Geo. Heyday! what's the matter now?

R. Weal. And that you derive every acre of your boasted patrimony from your great-uncle, a soap-boiler!

Sir Geo. Infamous aspersion!

R. Weal. It was his bags, the fruits of his honest industry, that preserved your lazy, beggarly nobility. His wealth repaired your tottering hall, from the ruins of which even the rats had run.

Sir Geo. Better our name had perished! Insupportable, soap-boiling, uncle!

R. Weal. Traduce a trader in the country of commerce! It is treason against the community; and, for your punishment, I would have you restored to the sordid condition from whence we drew you, and, like your predecessors the Picts, stript, painted, and fed upon hips, haws, and blackberries.

Sir Geo. A truce, dear haberdasher!

R. Weal. One pleasure I have, that to this goal you are upon the gallop; but have a care! the sword hangs but by a thread. When next we meet, know me for the master of your fate.

[*Exit.*

Sir Geo. Insolent mechanic! But that his Bourgeois blood would have soiled my sword—

Enter BARON *and* LOADER.

Sir Wil. What is de matter?

Sir Geo. A fellow here, upon the credit of a little affinity, has dared to upbraid me with being sprung from a soap-boiler.

Sir Wil. Vat, you from the boiler of soap?

Sir Geo. Me!

Sir Wil. Aha, begar, dat is anoder ting—And harka you, Mister Monsieur, ha—how dare a you have d'affrontary—

Sir Geo. How?

Sir Wil. De impertinence to sit down, play wid me?

Sir Geo. What is this?

Sir Wil. A beggarly Bourgeois vis-a-vis a Baron of twenty descents!

Load. But, Baron—

Sir Wil. Bygar, I am almost ashamed to win of such a low, dirty—Give me my monies, and let a me never see your face.

Load. Why, but, Baron, you mistake this thing; I know the old buck this fellow prates about.

Sir Wil. May be.

Load. Pigeon me, as true a gentleman as the Grand Signior. He was, indeed, a good-natured, obliging, friendly fellow; and being a great judge of soap, tar, and train-oil, he used to have it home to his house, and sell it to his acquaintances for ready money, to serve them.

Sir Wil. Was dat all?

Load. Upon my honour!

Sir Wil. Oh dat, dat is anoder ting. Bygar, I was afraid he was negotiant.

Load. Nothing like it.

Enter DICK.

Dick. A gentleman to enquire for Mr Loader. [*Exit.*

Load. I come—A pretty son-of-a-bitch this Baron! Pimps for the man, picks his pocket, and then wants to kick him out of company, because his uncle was an oilman! [*Exit.*

Sir Wil. I beg pardon, Chevalier, I was mistake.

Sir Gre. Oh, don't mention it; had the flam been fact, your behaviour was natural enough.

Enter LOADER.

Load. Mr Smirk, the auctioneer.

Sir Geo. Show him in by all means.

[*Exit* LOADER.

Sir Wil. You have affair.

Sir Geo. If you'll walk into the next room, they will be finished in five minutes.

[*Exit* SIR WILLIAM.

Enter LOADER, *with* SHIFT *as* SMIRK.

Load. Here's master Smirk; this is the gentleman. Hark'e, knight, did I not tell you old Moll was your mark? Here she has brought you a pretty piece of man's meat already; as sweet as a nosegay, and as ripe as a cherry, you rogue! Dispatch him, mean time we'll manage the girl. [*Exit.*

Smirk. You are the principal.

Sir Geo. Even so. I have, Mr Smirk, some things of a considerable value, which I want to dispose of immediately.

Smirk. You have?

Sir Geo. Could you assist me?

Smirk. Doubtless.

Sir Geo. But directly?

Smirk. We have an auction at twelve. I'll add your cargo to the catalogue.

Sir Geo. Can that be done?

Smirk. Every day's practice: it is for the credit of the sale. Last week, amongst the valuable effects of a gentleman going abroad, I sold a choice collection of china, with a curious service of plate; though the real party was never master of above two Delf dishes and a dozen of pewter in all his life.

Sir Geo. Very artificial! But this must be concealed.

Smiak. Buried here. Oh, many an aigrette and solitaire have I sold, to discharge a lady's play debt. But then we must know the parties, otherwise it might be knocked down to the husband himself.—Ha, ha!—Hey ho!

Sir Geo. True. Upon my word, your profession requires parts.

Smirk. Nobody's more. Did you ever hear, sir George, what first brought me into the business?

Sir Geo. Never.

Smirk. Quite an accident, as I may say. You must have known my predecessor, Mr Prig, the greatest man in the world in his way, aye, or that ever was, or ever will be; quite a jewel of a man; he would touch you up a lot; there was no resisting him. He would force you to bid whether you would or no. I shall never see his equal.

Sir Geo. You are modest, Mr Smirk.

Smirk. No, no, but his shadow. Far be it from me to vie with that great man. But, as I was saying, my predecessor, Mr Prig, was to have a sale, as it might be on a Saturday. On Friday, at noon (I shall never forget the day,) he was suddenly seized with a violent colic. He sent for me to his bed-side, squeezed me by the hand, dear Smirk, said he, what an accident! You know what is to-morrow; the greatest show this season; prints, pictures, bronzes, butterflies, medals, and minionettes: all the world will be there; Lady Dy Joss, Mrs Nankyn, the Duchess of Dupe, and every body at all: you see my state, it will be impossible for me to mount. What can I do? It was not for me, you know, to advise that great man.

Sir Geo. No, no.

Smirk. At last, looking wishfully at me, Smirk, says he, d'you love me?—Mr Prig, can you doubt it?——I'll put it to the test, says he; supply my place to-morrow.—I, eager to show my love, rashly and rapidly replied,——I will.

Sir Geo. That was bold!

Smirk. Absolute madness! But I had gone too far to recede. Then the point was, to prepare for the awful occasion. The first want that occurred to me was a wig, but this was too material an article to depend on my own judgment. I resolved to consult my friends. I told them the affair—You hear, gentlemen, what has happened. Mr Prig, one of the greatest men in his way the world ever saw, or ever will, quite a jewel of a man, taken with a violent fit of the colic; to-morrow, the greatest show this season; prints, pictures, bronzes, butterflies, medals, and minionettes; every body in the world to be there; Lady Dy Joss, Mrs Nankyn, Duchess of Dupe, and all mankind: it being impossible he should mount, I have consented to sell—They stared—it is true, gentlemen. Now I should be glad to have your opinions as to a wig. They were divided: some recommended a tye, others a bag; one mentioned a bob, but was soon overruled. Now, for my part, I own I rather in-

clined to the bag; but to avoid the imputation of rashness, I resolved to take Mrs Smirk's judgment; my wife, a dear good woman, fine in figure, high in taste, a superior genius, and knows old china like a Nabob.

Sir Geo. What was her decision?

Smirk. I told her the case.—My dear, you know what has happened. My good friend Mr Prig, the greatest man in the world, in his way, that ever was, or ever will be, quite a jewel of a man, a violent fit of the colic——the greatest show this season to-morrow, pictures, and every thing in the world; all the world will be there: now, as it is impossible he should, I mount in his stead. You know the the importance of a wig; I have asked my friends—— some recommended a tye, others a bag—what is your opinion? Why, to deal freely, Mr Smirk, says she, a tye for your round, regular, smiling face, would be rather too formal, and a bag rather too boyish, deficient in dignity for the solemn occasion; were I worthy to advise, you should wear a something between both.—I'll be hanged if you don't mean a major! I jumpt at the hint, and a major it was.

Sir Geo. So, that was fixt?

Smirk. Finally. But next day, when I came to mount the rostrum, then was the trial. My limbs shook, and my tongue trembled. The first lot was a chamber-utensil, in Chelsea china, of the pea-green pattern. It occasioned a great laugh; but I got through it. Her Grace, indeed, gave me great encouragement. I overheard her whisper to lady Dy, upon my word Mr Smirk does it very well. Very well, indeed, Mr Smirk, addressing herself to me. I made an acknowledging bow to her grace, as in duty bound. But one flower flounced involuntarily from me that day, as I may say. I remember Dr Trifle called it enthusiastic, and pronounced it a presage of my future greatness.

Sir Geo. What was that?

Smirk. Why, sir, the lot was a Guido; a single figure, a marvellous fine performance, well preserved, and highly finished. It stuck at five-and-forty; I, charmed with the picture, and piqued at the people, A-going for five-and-forty, nobody more than five-and-forty——Pray, ladies and gentlemen, look at this piece, quite flesh and blood, and only wants a touch from the torch of Prometheus to start from the canvas and fall a bidding. A general plaudit ensued; I bowed, and in three minutes knocked it down at sixty-three, ten.

Sir Geo. That was a stroke at least equal to your master.

Smirk. O dear me! you did not know the great man, alike in every thing. He had as much to say upon a ribbon as a Raphael. His manner, too, was inimitably fine. I remember, they took him off at the play-house, some time ago; pleasant, but wrong. Public characters should not be sported with—they are sacred—But we lose time.

Sir Geo. Oh, in the lobby, on the table, you will find the particulars.

Smirt. We shall see you. There will be a world of company. I shall please you. But the great nicety of our art is, the eye. Mark how mine skims round the room. Some bidders are shy, and only advance with a nod; but I nail them. One, two, three, four, five. You will be surprised———Ha, ha, ha! heigh ho!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter SIR GEORGE *and* LOADER.

Sir Geo. A most infernal run! Let's see.—[*Pulls out a card.*] Loader a thousand, the baron two, Tally———Enough to beggar a banker. Every shilling of Transfer's supply exhausted! nor will even the sale of my moveables prove sufficient to discharge my debts. Death and the devil! In what a complication of calamities has a few days plunged me! And no resource!

Load. Knight, here's old Moll come to wait on you; she has brought the tid-bit I spoke of. Shall I bid her send her in?

Sir Geo. Pray do. [*Exit* LOADER.

Enter MRS COLE *and* LUCY.

Mrs Cole. Come along, Lucy. You bashful baggage, I thought I had silenced your scruples. Don't you remember what Mr Squintum said? A woman's not worth saving, that won't be guilty of a swinging sin; for, then, they have matter to repent upon. Here, your honour, I leave her to your management. She is young, tender, and timid! does not know what is for her own good: but your honour will soon teach her. I would willingly stay, but I must not lose the lecture. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. Upon my credit, a fine figure! Awkward—Can't produce her publicly as mine—but she will do for private amusement—Will you be seated, miss? Dumb! quite a picture! She, too, wants a touch of the Promethean torch—Will you be so kind, madam, to walk from your frame and take a chair? Come, prithee, why so coy? Nay, I am not very adroit in the custom of this country. I suppose I must conduct you—Come, miss.

Lucy. O, sir!

Sir Geo. Child!

Lucy. If you have any humanity, spare me.

Sir Geo. In tears! What can this mean? Artifice. A project to raise the price, I suppose.—Look'e, my dear, you may save this piece for another occasion. It won't do with me; I am no novice—So, child, a truce to your tragedy, I beg.

Lucy. Indeed, you wrong me, sir; indeed, you do.

Sir Geo. Wrong you! how came you here, and for what purpose?

Lucy. A shameful one. I know it all; and yet believe me, sir, I am innocent.

Sir Geo. Oh, I don't question that. Your pious patroness is a proof of your innocence.

Lucy. What can I say to gain your credit?—And yet, sir, strong as appearances are against me, by all that's holy, you see me here, a poor, distrest, involuntary victim!

Sir Geo. Her style's above the common class; her tears are real. Rise, child! How the poor creature trembles!

Lucy. Say, then, I am safe.

Sir Geo. Fear nothing.

Lucy. May Heaven reward you! I cannot.

Sir Geo. Prithee, child, collect yourself, and help me to unravel this mystery. You came hither willingly—there was no force?

Lucy. None.

Sir Geo. You know Mrs Cole?

Lucy. Too well.

Sir Geo. How came you, then, to trust her?

Lucy. Mine, sir, is a tedious, melancholy tale.

Sir Geo. And artless, too?

Lucy. As innocence.

Sir Geo. Give it me.

Lucy. It will tire you.

Sir Geo. Not, if it be true. Be just, and you will find me generous.

Lucy. On that, sir, I relied, in venturing hither.

Sir Geo. You did me justice. Trust me with all your story. If you deserve, depend upon my protection.

Lucy. Some months ago, sir, I was considered as the joint heiress of a respectable wealthy merchant; dear to my friends, happy in my prospects, and my father's favourite.

Sir Geo. His name?

Lucy. There you must pardon me. Unkind and cruel though he has been to me, let me discharge the duty of a daughter; suffer in silence, nor bring reproach on him, who gave me being.

Sir Geo. I applaud your piety.

Lucy. At this happy period, my father, judging an addition of wealth must bring an increase of happiness, resolved to unite me with a man, sordid in his mind, brutal in his manners, and riches his only recommendation. My refusal of this ill-suited match, though mildly given, inflamed my father's temper, naturally choleric, alienated his affections, and banished me his house, distrest and destitute.

Sir Geo. Would no friend receive you?

Lucy. Alas, how few are friends to the unfortunate! Besides, I knew, sir, such a step would be considered by my father as an appeal from his justice. I, therefore, retired to a remote corner of the town, trusting, as my only advocate, to the tender calls of nature, in his cool reflecting hours.

Sir Geo. How came you to know this woman?

Lucy. Accident placed me in a house, the mistress of which professed the same principles with my infamous conductress. There, as enthusiasm is the child of melancholy, I caught the infection. A constant attendance on their assemblies procured me the acquaintance of this woman, whose extraordinary zeal and devotion first drew my attention and confidence. I trusted her with my story, and, in return, received the warmest invitation to take the protection of her house. This I unfortunately accepted.

Sir Geo. Unfortunately, indeed!

Lucy. By the decency of appearances, I was some time imposed upon; but an accident, which you will excuse my repeating, revealed all the horror of my situation. I will not trouble you with a recital of all the arts used to seduce me: happily they hitherto have failed. But this morning I was acquainted with my destiny; and no other election left me, but immediate compliance, or a jail. In this desperate condition, you cannot wonder, sir, at my choosing rather to rely on the generosity of a gentleman, than the humanity of a creature insensible to pity, and void of every virtue.

Sir Geo. The event shall justify your choice. You have my faith and honour for your security. For, though I can't boast of my own goodness, yet I have an honest feeling for afflicted virtue; and, however unfashionable, a spirit that dares afford it protection. Give me your hand. As soon as I have dispatched some pressing business here, I will lodge you in an asylum, sacred to the distresses of your sex, where indigent beauty is guarded from temptations, and deluded innocence rescued from infamy. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter SHIFT.

Shift. Zooks, I have toiled like a horse; quite tired, by Jupiter! And what shall I get for my pains? The old fellow here talks of making me easy for life. Easy! and what does he mean by easy? He'll make me an exciseman, I suppose? and so, with an inkhorn at my button-hole, and a taper switch in my hand, I shall run about gauging of beer barrels. No, that will never do. This lad, here, is no fool. Foppish, indeed. He does not want parts, no, nor principles neither. I overheard his scene with the girl; I think I may

trust him. I have a great mind to venture it.—It is a shame to have him duped by this old don. It must not be. I'll in, and unfold—Ha! Egad, I have a thought too, which, if my heir apparent can execute, I shall still lie concealed, and perhaps be rewarded on both sides.

I have it; 'tis engendered, piping hot.
And now, sir Knight, I'll match you with a plot. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR WILLIAM *and* RICHARD WEALTHY.

R. Weal. Well, I suppose, by this time, you are satisfied what a scoundrel you have brought into the world, and are ready to finish your foolery?

Sir Wil. Got to the catastrophe, good brother.

R. Weal. Let us have it over, then.

Sir Wil. I have already alarmed all his tradesmen. I suppose we shall soon have him here, with a legion of bailiffs and constables. Oh, have you my will about you?

R. Weal. Yes, yes.

Sir Wil. It is almost time to produce it, or read him the clause that relates to his rejecting your daughter. That will do his business. But they come. I must return to my character.

Enter SHIFT.

Shift. Sir, sir, we are all in the wrong box—our scheme is blown up; your son has detected Loader and Tally, and is playing the very devil within.

Sir Wil. Oh, the bunglers!

Shift. Now for it, youngster.

Enter SIR GEORGE, *driving in* LOADER *and another.*

Sir Geo. Rascals! robbers! that, like the locust, mark the road you have taken by the ruin and desolation you leave behind you!

Load. Sir George!

Sir Geo. And can youth, however cautious, be guarded against such deep-laid, complicated villainy? Where are the rest of your diabolical crew? your auctioneer, usurer, and—O, sir, are you here? I am glad you have not escaped us, however.

Sir Wil. What de devil is de matter?

Sir Geo. Your birth, which I believe an imposition, preserves you, however, from the discipline those rogues have received. A baron! a nobleman! a sharper! O, shame! It is enough to banish all confidence from the world. On whose faith can we rely, when those, whose honour is held as sacred as an oath, unmindful of their dignity, descend to rival pick-pockets in their infamous arts. What are these? [*Pulls out dice.*] Pretty implements! The fruits of your leisure hours! they are dexterously done. You have a fine mechanical turn. Dick, secure the door.

MRS COLE, *speaking as entering.*

Mrs Cole. Here I am at last. Well, and how is your honour, and the little gentlewoman?—Bless me! what is the matter here?

Sir Geo. I am, madam, treating your friends with a cold collation, and you are opportunely come for your share. The little gentlewoman is safe, and in much better hands than you designed her. Abominable hypocrite! who, tottering under the load of irreverent age and infamous diseases, inflexibly proceed in the practice of every vice, impiously prostituting the most sacred institutions to the most infernal purposes.

Mrs Cole. I hope your honour——

Sir Geo. Take her away! As you have been singular in your penitence, you ought to be distinguished in your penance; which, I promise you, shall be most publicly and plentifully bestowed. [*Exit* MRS COLE.

Enter DICK.

Dick. The constables, sir.

Enter Constables.

Sir Geo. Let them come in, that I may consign these gentlemen to their care. [*To* SIR WILLIAM.] Your letters of nobility you will produce in a court of justice. Though, if I read you right, you are one of those indigent, itinerant nobles of your own creation, which our reputation for hospitality draws hither in shoals, to the shame of our understanding, the impairing of our fortunes, and, when you are trusted, the betraying of our designs. Officers, do your duty.

Sir Wil. Why, don't you know me?

Sir Geo. Just as I guessed. An impostor.—He has recovered the free use of his tongue already.

Sir Wil. Nay, but George——

Sir Geo. Insolent familiarity! away with him!

Sir Wil. Hold, hold a moment! Brother Richard, set this matter to rights.

R. Weal. Don't you know him?

Sir Geo. Know him! the very question is an affront.

R. Weal. Nay, I don't wonder at it. 'Tis your father, you fool!

Sir Geo. My father? Impossible!

Sir Wil. That may be, but 'tis true.

Sir Geo. My father alive! Thus let me greet the blessing.

Sir Wil. Alive! Ay, and I believe I shan't be in a hurry to die again.

Sir Geo. But, dear sir, the report of your death——and this disguise——to what——

Sir Wil. Don't ask any questions. Your uncle will tell you all. For my part, I am sick of the scheme.

R. Weal. I told you what would become of your politics.

Sir Wil You did so; but if it had not been for those clumsy scoundrels, the plot was as good a plot—O, George! such discoveries I have to make. Within, I'll unravel the whole.

Sir Geo. Perhaps, sir, I may match them.

Shift. Sir!

[*Pulls him by sleeve.*

Sir Geo. Never fear. It is impossible, gentlemen, to determine your fate, till this matter is more fully explained; till when, keep him safe in custody. Do you know them, sir?

Sir Wil. Yes, but that's more than they did me. I can cancel your debts there, and, I believe, prevail on those gentlemen to refund, too ——But you have been a sad profligate young dog, George.

Sir Geo. I can't boast of my goodness, sir, but I think I could produce you a proof that I am not so totally destitute of——

Sir Wil. Ay! why, then, prithee do.

Sir Geo. I have, sir, this day, resisted a temptation, that greater pretenders to morality might have yielded to. But I will trust myself no longer, and must crave your interposition and protection.

Sir Wil. To what?

Sir Geo. I will attend you with the explanation in an instant.

[*Exit* SIR GEO.

Sir Wil. Prithee, Shift, what does he mean?

Shift. I believe I can guess.

Sir Wil. Let us have it.

Shift. I suppose the affair I overheard, just now; a prodigious fine, elegant girl, faith, that, discarded by her family, for refusing to marry her grandfather, fell into the hands of the venerable lady you saw; who, being the kind caterer for your son's amusements, brought her hither for a purpose obvious enough. But the young gentleman, touched with her story, truth, and tears, was converted from the spoiler of her honour, to the protector of her innocence.

Sir Wil. Look'e there, brother, did not I tell you that George was not so bad at the bottom?

R. Weal. This does indeed atone for half the ——But they are here.

Enter SIR GEORGE *and* LUCY.

Sir Geo. Fear nothing, madam, you may safely rely on the——

Lucy. My father!

R. Weal. Lucy!

Lucy. O, sir, can you forgive your poor distrest, unhappy girl? You scarce can guess how hardly I've been used since my banishment from your parental roof. Want, pining want, anguish, and shame, have been my constant partners.

Sir Wil. Brother!

Sir Geo. Sir!

Lucy. Father!

R. Weal. Rise, child; 'tis I must ask thee forgiveness. Canst thou forget the woes I've made thee suffer? Come to my arms once more, thou darling of my age! What mischief had my rashness nearly completed! Nephew, I scarce can thank you as I ought, but——

Sir Geo. I am richly paid, in being the happy instrument—Yet, might I urge a wish——

R. Weal. Name it.

Sir Geo. That you would forgive my follies of to-day; and, as I have been providentially the occasional guardian of your daughter's honour, that you would bestow on me that right for life.

R. Weal. That must depend on Lucy; her will, not mine, shall now direct her choice—— What says your father?

Sir Wil. Me! Oh, I'll show you in an instant. Give me your hands. There, children; now you are joined; and the devil take him that wishes to part you!

Sir Geo. I thank you for us both.

R. Weal. Happiness attend you!

Sir Wil. Now, brother, I hope you will allow me to be a good plotter. All this was brought to bear by my means.

Shift. With my assistance, I hope, you'll own, sir?

Sir Wil. That's true, honest Shift, and thou shalt be richly rewarded; nay, George shall be your friend, too. This Shift is an ingenious fellow, let me tell you, son.

Sir Geo. I am no stranger to his abilities, sir. But, if you please, we will retire. The various struggles of this fair sufferer require the soothing softness of a sister's love. And now, sir, I hope your fears for me are over; for, had I not this motive to restrain my follies, yet I now know the town too well to be ever its bubble, and will take care to preserve, at least,

Some more estate, and principles, and wit,
Than brokers, bawds, and gamesters shall think fit.

SHIFT, *addressing himself to* SIR GEORGE.

And what becomes of your poor servant, Shift?
Your father talks of lending me a lift——
A great man's promise, when his turn is served;
Capons, on promises, would soon be starved:
No; on myself alone I'll now rely:
'Gad, I've a thriving traffic in my eye——
Near the mad mansions of Moorfields I'll bawl:
Friends, fathers, mothers, sisters, sons, and all,
Shut up your shops, and listen to my call.
With labour, toil, all second means dispense,

And live a rent-charge upon Providence.
Prick up your ears; a story now I'll tell,
Which once a widow and her child befel;
I knew the mother and her daughter well.
Poor, it is true, they were; but never wanted,
For whatsoe'er they asked, was always granted:
One fatal day the matron's truth was tried,
She wanted meat and drink, and fairly cried.
[*Child.*] Mother, you cry! [*Moth.*] Oh, child, I've got no bread!
[*Child.*] What matters that? Why, Providence an't dead!
With reason good, this truth the child might say,
For there came in at noon, that very day,
Bread, greens, potatoes, and a leg of mutton,
A better, sure, a table ne'er was put on:
Ay, that might be, we cry, with those poor souls;
But we ne'er had a rasher for the coals.
And d'ye deserve it? How d'ye spend your days?
In pastimes, prodigality, and plays!
Let's go see Foote! ah, Foote's a precious limb!
Old Nick will soon a foot-ball make of him!
For foremost rows in side-boxes you shove;
Think you to meet with side-boxes above,
Where giggling girls, and powdered fops may sit?
No, no! you will be crammed into the pit,
And crowd the house for Satan's benefit.
Oh! what, you snivel? well, do so no more;
Drop, to atone, your money at the door,
And, if I please, I'll give it to the poor.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

OLD MAID.

BY

MURPHY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
CLERIMONT, *in love with* MRS HARLOW.	MRS HARLOW, *wife to* MR HARLOW.
CAPTAIN CAPE, *attached to* MISS HARLOW.	MISS HARLOW, *the Old Maid, in love with* CLERIMONT.
MR HARLOW, *brother to* MISS HARLOW.	TRIFLE, *her servant.*
MR HEARTWELL, *uncle to* CLERIMONT.	
Footman.	

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter MRS HARLOW *and* MISS HARLOW.

Mrs Har. MY dear sister, let me tell you—

Miss Har. But, my dear sister, let me tell you it is in vain; you can say nothing that will have any effect.

Mrs Har. Not, if you won't hear me; only hear me——

Miss Har. Oh! madam, I know you love to hear yourself talk, and so please yourself—but I am resolved——

Mrs Har. Your resolution may alter.

Miss Har. Never.

Mrs Har. Upon a little consideration.

Miss Har. Upon no consideration.

Mrs Har. You don't know how that may be; recollect, sister, that you are no chicken—you are not now of the age that becomes giddiness and folly.

Miss Har. Age, madam——

Mrs Har. Do but hear me, sister; do but hear me: A person of your years——

Miss Har. My years, sister! Upon my word—

Mrs Har. Nay, no offence, sister——

Miss Har. But there is offence, madam: I don't understand what you mean by it—always thwarting me with my years—my years, indeed! when, perhaps, madam, if I was to die of old age, some folks might have reason to look about them.

Mrs Har. She feels it, I see. Oh! I delight in mortifying her. [*Aside.*] Sister, if I did not love you, I am sure I should not talk to you in this manner. But how can you make so unkind a return now, as to alarm me about myself? In some sixteen or eighteen years after you, to be sure, I own I shall begin to think of making my will. How could you be so severe?

Miss Har. Some sixteen or eighteen years, madam! If you would own the truth, madam—

I believe, madam—you would find, madam, that the disparity, madam, is not so very great, madam——

Mrs Har. Well, I vow passion becomes you inordinately! It blends a few roses with the lilies of your cheek, and——

Miss Har. And though you are married to my brother, madam, I would have you to know, madam, that you are not thereby any way authorised, madam, to take unbecoming liberties with your sister. I am independent of my brother, madam; my fortune is in my own hands, madam, and, madam—

Mrs Har. Well! do you know now, when your blood circulates a little, that I think you look mighty well? But you was in the wrong not to marry at my age—sweet three and twenty! You can't conceive what a deal of good it would have done your temper and your spirits, if you had married early——

Miss Har. Insolent! provoking! female malice!

Mrs Har. But to be waiting till it is almost too late in the day, and force one's self to say strange things—with the tongue and heart at variance all the time—'I don't mind the hideous 'men'—'I am very happy as I am'—and all that time, my dear, dear sister, to be upon the tenter-hooks of expectation———

Miss Har. I upon tenter-hooks!

Mrs Har. And to be at this work of sour grapes, till one is turned of three and forty—

Miss Har. Three and forty, madam! I desire sister—I desire, madam—three and forty, madam!

Mrs Har. Nay, nay, nay; don't be angry—don't blame me; blame my husband; he is your own brother, you know, and he knows your age. He told me so.

Miss Har. Oh! madam, I see your drift—but you need not give yourself those airs, madam ——the men don't see with your eyes, madam —years, indeed! Three and forty, truly! I'll assure you—upon my word—hah! very fine! But I see plainly, madam, what you are at—Mr Clerimont, madam! Mr Clerimont, sister! that's what frets you—a young husband, madam—Younger than your husband, madam—Mr Clerimont, let me tell you, madam———

Enter TRIFLE.

Tri. Oh! rare news, madam! charming news! we have got another letter———

Miss Har. From whom? From Mr Clerimont? where is it?

Tri. Yes, madam; from Mr Clerimont, madam.

Miss Har. Let me see it; let me see it—quick, quick! [*Reads.*

'Madam,

'The honour of a letter from you has so filled 'my mind with joy and gratitude, that I want 'words of force to reach but half my meaning. 'I can only say that you have revived a heart 'that was expiring for you, and now beats for 'you alone.'—

There, sister, mind that! Years indeed!

[*Reads to herself.*

Mrs Har. I wish you joy, sister———I wish I had not gone to Ranelagh with her last week. Who could have thought that her faded beauties would have made such an impression on him?

[*Aside.*

Miss Har. Mind here again, sister. [*Reads.*] 'Ever since I had the good fortune of seeing 'you at Ranelagh, your idea has been ever pre-'sent to me; and, since you now give me leave, 'I shall, without delay, wait upon your brother, 'and whatever terms he prescribes, I shall readily 'subscribe to; for, to be your slave, is dearer to 'me than liberty. I have the honour to remain,

'The humblest of your admirers,

'CLERIMONT.'

There, sister!

Mrs Har. Well, I wish you joy again—but remember I tell you, take care what you do—He is young, and, of course, giddy and inconstant.

Miss Har. He is warm, passionate, and tender.

Mrs Har. But you don't know how long that may last; and here are you going to break off a very suitable match, which all your friends liked and approved, a match with captain Cape, who, to be sure———

Miss Har. Don't name captain Cape, I beseech you! don't name him———

Mrs Har. Captain Cape, let me tell you, is not to be despised; he has acquired, by his voyages to India, a very pretty fortune——has a charming box of a house upon Hackney Marsh, and is of an age every way suitable to you.

Miss Har. There again, now! Age, age, age for ever! Years, years, my years! But I tell you once for all, Mr Clerimont does not see with your eyes; I am determined to hear no more of captain Cape; odious Hackney Marsh! ah, sister! you would be glad to see me married in a middling way———

Mrs Har. I, sister! I am sure nobody will rejoice more at your preferment—I am resolved never to visit her, if Mr Clerimont marries her.

[*Aside.*

Miss Har. Well, well; I tell you Mr Clerimont has won my heart; young, handsome, rich—town-house, country-house—equipage—to him, and only him, will I surrender myself—three and forty, indeed! ha, ha! you see, my dear, dear sister, that these features are still regular and blooming; that the love-darting eye has not quite forsook me; and that I have made a conquest which your boasted youth might be vain of.

Mrs Har. [illegible] madam, I beg you I have taken too much liberty for you

Miss Har. I humbly thank you for your advice, my sweet, dear, friendly sister; but don't envy me, I beg you won't; don't fret yourself; you can't conceive what a deal of good a serenity of mind will do your health. I'll go and write an answer directly to this charming, charming letter—sister, yours—I shall be glad to see you, sister, at my house in Hill-street, when I am Mrs Clerimont—and remember what I tell you—that some faces retain their bloom and beauty longer than you imagine, my dear sister—come, Trifle—let me fly this moment—sister, your servant.

[*Exit* MISS HAR. *with* TRI.

Mrs Har. Your servant, my dear. Well, I am determined to lead the gayest life in nature, if she marries Clerimont. I'll have a new equipage, that's one thing—and I'll have greater routs than her, that's another—positively, I must outshine her there—and I'll keep up a polite enmity with her—go and see her, may be, once or twice in a winter—'Madam, I am really so hurried with 'such a number of acquaintances, that I can't 'possibly find time.'—And then to provoke her, 'I wish you joy, sister; I hear you are breeding.' Ha, ha! that will so mortify her—'I wish it may 'be a boy, sister.'—Ha, ha! and then when her husband begins to despise her, 'Really, sister, I 'pity you—had you taken my advice, and married the India captain—your case is a compassionate one.'—Compassion is so insolent when a body feels none at all—ha, ha! it is the finest way of insulting———

Enter MR HARLOW.

Mr Har. So, my dear; how are my sister's affairs going on?

Mrs Har. Why, my dear, she has had another letter from Mr Clerimont; did you ever hear of such an odd, unaccountable thing, patched up in a hurry here?

Mr Har. Why, it is sudden, to be sure.

Mrs Har. Upon my word, I think you had better advise her not to break off with captain Tape———

Mr Har. No, not I; I wish she may be married to one or other of them—for her temper is really grown so very sour, and there is such eternal wrangling between ye both, that I wish to have her in her own house, for the peace and quiet of mine.

Mrs Har. Do you know this Mr Clerimont?

Mr Har. No; but I have heard of the family—there is a very fine fortune—I wish he may have intention.

Mrs Har. Why, I doubt it vastly.

Mr Har. And truly so do I; for, between ourselves, I see no charms in my sister———

Mrs Har. For my part, I can't comprehend it how he could strike his fancy, is to me the most astonishing thing—after this, I shall be surprised at nothing———

Mr Har. Well, strange things do happen; so she is but married out of the way, I am satisfied—an old maid in a house is the devil———

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Mr Clerimont, sir, to wait on you—

Mr Har. Shew him in—[*Exit Ser.*]—How comes this visit, pray?

Mrs Har. My sister wrote to him to explain himself to you; well, it is mighty odd—but I'll leave you to yourselves. The man must be an idiot to think of her. [*Aside, and exit.*

Enter CLERIMONT.

Mr Har. Sir, I am glad to have this pleasure.

Cle. I presume, sir, you are no stranger to the business that occasions this visit?

Mr Har. Sir, the honour you do me and my family———

Cle. Oh, sir! to be allied to your family, by so tender a tie as a marriage with your sister, will at once reflect a credit upon me, and conduce to my happiness in the most essential point. The lady charmed me at the very first sight.

Mr Har. The devil she did! [*Aside.*

Cle. The sensibility of her countenance, the elegance of her figure, the sweetness of her manner——

Mr Har. Sir, you are pleased to——compliment.

Cle. Compliment! not in the least, sir.

Mr Har. The sweetness of my sister's manner!—[*Aside.*]—Ha, ha!

Cle. The first time I saw her was a few nights ago at Ranelagh; though there was a crowd of beauties in the room, thronging and pressing all around, yet she shone amongst them all with superior lustre—she was walking arm in arm with another lady—no opportunity offered for me to form an acquaintance amidst the hurry and bustle of the place, but I enquired their names, as they were going into their chariot, and learned they were Mrs and Miss Harlow. From that moment she won my heart, and, at one glance, I became the willing captive of her beauty—

Mr Har. A very candid declaration, sir! How can this be? The bloom has been off the peach any time these fifteen years, to my knowledge—[*Aside.*]—You see my sister with a favourable eye, sir.

Cle. A favourable eye! He must greatly want discernment, who has not a quick perception of her merit.

Mr Har. You do her a great deal of honour—but this affair——is it not somewhat sudden, sir?

Cle. I grant it; you may, indeed, be surprised at it, sir; nor should I have been hardy enough to make any overtures to you, as least yet a

while, if she herself had not condescended to listen to my passion, and authorised me, under her own fair hand, to apply to her brother for his consent———

Mr Har. I shall be very ready, sir, to give my approbation to my sister's happiness.

Cle. No doubt you will; but let me not cherish an unavailing flame, a flame that already lights up all my tenderest passions.

Mr Har. To you, sir, there can be no exception; I am not altogether a stranger to your family and fortune—His language is warm, considering my sister's age; but I won't hurt her preferment—[*Aside.*]—You will pardon me, sir, one thing; you are very young———

Cle. Sir, I am almost three and twenty.

Mr Har. But have you consulted your friends?

Cle. I have; my uncle, Mr Heartwell, who proposes to leave me a very handsome addition to my fortune, which is considerable already—he, sir———

Mr Har. Well, sir, if he has no objection, I can have none.

Cle. He has none, sir; he has given his consent; he desires me to lose no time; I will bring him to pay you a visit; he rejoices in my choice—you shall have it out of his own mouth—name your hour, and he shall attend you—

Mr Har. Any time to-day; I shall stay at home on purpose.

Cle. In the evening I will conduct him hither; in the mean time, I feel an attachment here—the lady, sir———

Mr Har. Oh! you want to see my sister? I will send her to you, sir, this instant. I beg your pardon for leaving you alone; ha, ha! who could have thought of her making a conquest at last!—[*Exit* MR HAR.

Cle. Sir, your most obedient—now, Clerimont, now your heart may rest content——your doubts and fears may all subside, and joy and rapture take their place—Miss Harlow shall be mine—she receives my vows; she approves my passion. [*Sings and dances.*] Soft! here she comes—Her very appearance controuls my wildest hopes, and hushes my proud heart into respect and silent admiration———

Enter MRS HARLOW.

Mrs Har. Sir, your servant———

Cle. Madam! [*Bows respectfully.*

Mrs Har. I thought Mr Harlow was here, sir.

Cle. Madam, he is but just gone———how a single glance of her eye over-awes me! [*Aside.*

Mrs Har. I wonder he would leave you alone, sir———that is not so polite in his own house———

Cle. How her modesty throws a veil over her inclinations! my tongue faulters! I cannot speak to her. [*Aside.*

Mrs Har. He seems in confusion—a pretty man, too! That this should be my sister's luck! [*Aside.*

Cle. Madam! [*Embarrassed.*

Mrs Har. I imagine you have been talking to him on the subject of the letter you sent this morning———

Cle. Madam, I have presumed to———

Mrs Har. Well, sir! and he has no objection, I hope?———

Cle. She hopes! Heavens bless her for the word! [*Aside.*] Madam, he has frankly consented, if his sister will do me that honour——

Mrs Har. For his sister, I think I may venture to answer, sir——

Cle. Generous, generous creature!

Mrs Har. You are sure, sir, of Miss Harlow's admiration, and the whole family hold themselves much obliged to you———

Cle. Madam, this extreme condescension has added rapture to the sentiments I felt before;—and it shall be the endeavour of my life to prove deserving of the amiable object I have dared to aspire to———

Mrs Har. Sir, I make no doubt of your sincerity—I have already declared my sentiments—you know Mr Harlow's; and, if my sister is willing, nothing will be wanting to conclude this business—If no difficulties arise from her, for her temper is uncertain——as to my consent, sir, your air, your manner, have commanded it——Sir, your most obedient—I'll send my sister to you——— [*Exit.*

Cle. Madam, [*Bowing.*] I shall endeavour to repay this goodness with excess of gratitude——Oh, she is an angel! and yet, stupid that I am, I could not give vent to the tenderness I have within—it is ever so with sincere and generous love; it fills the heart with rapture, and then denies the power of uttering what we so exquisitely feel. Generous Miss Harlow! who could thus see through my confusion, interpret all appearances favourably, and with a dignity superior to her sex's little arts, forego the idle ceremonies of coquetting, teazing, and tormenting her admirer! I hear somebody. Oh! here comes Mrs Harlow———what a gloom sits upon her features! She assumes authority here, I find; but I'll endeavour by insinuation and respect———

Enter MISS HARLOW.

Miss Har. My sister has told me, sir——

Cle. Madam——— [*Bowing chearfully.*

Miss Har. He is a sweet figure. [*Aside.*

Cle. She rather looks like Miss Harlow's mother than her sister-in-law——— [*Aside.*

Miss Har. He seems abashed; his respect is the cause. [*Aside.*] My sister told me, sir, that you was here. I beg pardon for making you wait so long——

Cle. Oh, madam! [*Bows.*] the gloom disappears from her face, but the lines of ill-nature remain—— [*Aside.*

Miss Har. I see he loves me by his confusion; I'll cheer him with affability. [*Aside.*] Sir, the letter you was pleased to send, my sister has seen——and——

Cle. And has assured me that she has no objection———

Miss Har. I am glad of that, sir——I was afraid——

Cle. No, madam, she has none—and Mr Harlow, I have seen him, too——he has honoured me with his consent——Now, madam, the only doubt remains with you; may I be permitted to hope———

Miss Har. Sir, you appear like a gentleman, and———

Cle. Madam, believe me, never was love more sincere, more justly founded on esteem, or kindled into higher admiration.

Miss Har. Sir, with the rest of the family, I hold myself much obliged to you, and——

Cle. Obliged! 'tis I that am obliged——there is no merit on my side—it is the consequence of impressions made upon my heart; and what heart can resist such beauty, such various graces!——

Miss Har. Sir, I am afraid—I wish my sister heard him. [*Aside.*] Sir, I am afraid you are lavish of your praise; and the short date of your love, sir———

Cle. It will burn with unabating ardour; the same charms, that first inspired it, will for ever cherish it, and add new fuel—But I presume you hold this style to try my sincerity—I see that's your aim; but could you read the feelings of my heart, you would not thus cruelly keep me in suspense.

Miss Har. Heavens! if my sister saw my power over him! [*Aside.*] A little suspense cannot be deemed unreasonable; marriage is an important affair—an affair for life; and some caution you will allow necessary——

Cle. Madam! [*Disconcerted.*] oh, I dread the sourness of her look!——— [*Aside.*

Miss Har. I cannot help observing, sir, that you dwell chiefly on articles of external and superficial merit; whereas the more valuable qualities of the mind, prudence, good sense, a well-regulated conduct——

Cle. Oh, madam! I am not inattentive to those matters——Oh! she has a notable household understanding, I warrant her; [*Aside.*] but let me intreat you, madam, to do justice to my principles, and believe me a sincere, a generous lover.

Miss Har. Sir, I will frankly own that I have been trying you all this time, and from henceforth all doubts are banished.

Cle. Your words recal me to new life; I shall for ever study to merit this goodness; but your fair sister—do you think I can depend upon her consent? May I flatter myself she will not change her mind?

Miss Har. My sister cannot be insensible of the honour you do us all; and, sir, as far as I can act with propriety in the affair, I will endeavour to keep them all inclined to favour you—

Cle. Madam! [*Bows.*

Miss Har. You have an interest in my breast that will be busy for you———

Cle. I am eternally devoted to you, madam—— [*Bows.*

Miss Har. How modest, and yet how expressive he is! [*Aside.*

Cle. Madam, I shall be for ever sensible of this extreme condescension, and shall think no pains too great to prove the gratitude and esteem I bear you——I beg my compliments to Mr Harlow, and I shall be here with my uncle in the evening—as early as possible I shall come; my respects to your sister, madam; and pray, madam, keep her in my interest. Madam, your most obedient—I have managed the motherly lady finely, I think. [*Aside.*] Madam! [*Bows, and exit.*

Miss Har. What will my sister say now? I shall hear no more of her taunts—A malicious thing! I fancy she now sees that your giddy flirts are not always the highest beauties——Set her up, indeed! Had she but heard him, the dear man! what sweet things he said! and what sweet things he looked———

Enter MRS HARLOW.

Mrs Har. Well, sister! how! what does he say?

Miss Har. Say, sister! Every thing that is charming—he is the prettiest man!

Mrs Har. Well, I am glad of it! but all is well that ends well——

Miss Har. Envy, sister! Envy, and downright malice! Oh, had you heard all the tender things he uttered, and with that extasy, too! that tenderness! that delight restrained by modesty!

Mrs Har. I don't know, though; there is something odd in it still———

Miss Har. Oh, I don't doubt but you will say so! but you will find I have beauty enough left to make some noise in the world still. The men, sister, are the best judges of female beauty—Don't concern yourself about it, sister.—Leave it all to them———

Mrs Har. But only think of a lover you never saw, but once at Ranelagh—

Miss Har. Very true! but even then, I saw what work I made in his heart—Oh! I am in raptures with him, and he is in raptures with me! [*Sings.*]

Yes, I'll have a husband, ay marry, &c.

Enter MR HARLOW.

Mr Har. So, sister! how stand matters now?

Miss Har. As I could wish; I shall no more be a trouble to you; he has declared himself in the most warm and vehement manner—Though my sister has her doubts—she is a good friend—she is afraid of my success———

Mrs Har. Pray, sister, don't think so meanly of me—I understand that sneer, madam———

Miss Har. And I understand you too, madam———

Mr Har. Come, come, I desire we may have no quarrelling; you two are always wrangling; but when you are separated, it is to be hoped you will then be more amicable. Things are now in a fair way; though, sister, let me tell you, I am afraid our India friend will think himself ill-treated.

Mrs Har. That's what I fear, too; that's my reason for speaking———

Miss Har. O, never throw away a thought on him! Mr Clerimont has my heart; and now I think I am settled for life! Sister—I love to plague her—now, I think, I am settled for life! for life! for life, my dear sister!——

Enter Servant.

Ser. Dinner is served, sir.

Mr Har. Very well! come, sister, I give you joy; let us in to dinner.

Miss Har. Oh, vulgar! I can't eat: I must go and dress my head over again, and do a thousand things; for I am determined I'll look this afternoon as well as ever I can. [*Exit.*

Mrs Har. Is not all this amazing, my dear! Her head is turned!

Mr Har. Well, let it all pass: don't you mind it; don't you say any thing; let her get married if she can; I am sure I shall rejoice at it.

Mrs Har. And, upon my word, my dear, so shall I; and, if I interfere, it is purely out of friendship.

Mr Har. But be advised by me; say no more to her. If the affair goes on, we shall fairly get rid of her. Her peevish humours, and her maiden temper, are become insupportable. Come, let us in to dinner. If Mr Clerimont marries her, which, indeed, will be odd enough, we shall then enjoy a little peace and quiet. [*Exit* MR HAR.

Mrs Har. What in the world could the man see in her? Oh! he will repent his bargain in a week or a fortnight; that I am sure he will—she is gone to dress now! ha, ha!

Oh, how she rolls her pretty eyes in spite,
And looks delightfully with all her might!

Ha, ha! delightfully she will look, indeed!
[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter CAPT. CAPE, *and a Servant.*

Ser. YES, sir, my master is at home; he has just done dinner, sir.

Capt. Cape. Very well, then; tell him I would speak a word with him.

Ser. I beg pardon, sir; I am but a stranger in the family; who shall I say?—

Capt. Cape. Captain Cape, tell him.

Ser. Yes, sir. [*Exit Ser.*

Capt. Cape. I can hardly believe my own eyes! 'Sdeath! I am almost inclined to think this letter, signed with Miss Harlow's name, a mere forgery by some enemy, to drive me into an excess of passion, and so injure us both; I don't know what to say to it.

Enter MR HARLOW.

Capt. Cape. Sir, I have waited on you about an extraordinary affair; I can't comprehend it, sir. Here is a letter with your sister's name—Look at it, sir—Is that her hand-writing?

Mr Har. Yes, sir: I take it to be her writing.

Capt. Cape. And do you know the contents?

Mr Har. I can't say I have read it; but—

Capt. Cape. But you know the purport of it?

Mr Har. Partly.

Capt. Cape. You do? and is not it base treatment, sir?—is it not unwarrantable?—can you justify her?

Mr Har. For my part, I leave women to manage their own affairs; I am not fond of intermeddling——

Capt. Cape. But, sir, let me ask you—Was not every thing agreed upon? Are not the writings now in lawyers' hands? Was not next week fixed for our wedding?

Mr Har. I understood it so.

Capt. Cape. Very well, then; and see how she treats me! She writes me here, in a contemptuous manner, that she recals her promise; it was rashly given; she has thought better of it; she will listen to me no more; she is going to dispose of herself to a gentleman with whom she can be happy for life—and I desire to see you no more, sir! There, that's free and easy, is not it? What do you say to that?

Mr Har. Why, really, sir, it is not my affair; I have nothing to say to it.

Capt. Cape. Nothing to say to it! Sir, I imagined I was dealing with people of honour!

Mr Har. You have been dealing with a woman; and, you know—

Capt. Cape. Yes, I know—I know the treachery of the sex!—Who is this gentleman, pray?

Mr Har. His name is Clerimont—they have fixed the affair among themselves, and amongst them be it for me.

Capt. Cape. Very fine! mighty fine! is Miss Harlow at home, sir?

Mr Har. She is; and here she comes, too!

Capt. Cape. Very well! let me hear it from herself, that's all; I desire to hear her speak for herself.

Mr Har. With all my heart. I'll leave you together—you know, captain, I was never fond of being concerned in those things. [*Exit.*

Enter MISS HARLOW.

Miss Har. Capt. Cape! this is mighty odd—I thought, sir, I desired—

Capt. Cape. Madam, I acknowledge the receipt of your letter; and, madam, the usage is so extraordinary, that I hold myself excusable if I refuse to comply with the terms you impose upon me.

Miss Har. Sir, I really wonder what you can mean?

Capt. Cape. Mistake me not, madam; I am not come to whimper or to whine, and to make a puppy of myself again; madam, that is all blown over.

Miss Har. Well, then, there is no harm done, and you will survive this, I hope.

Capt. Cape. Survive it!

Miss Har. Yes; you won't grow desperate, I hope? Suppose you were to order somebody to take care of you, because you know fits of despair are sudden, and you may rashly do yourself a mischief—don't do any such thing; I beg you won't——

Capt. Cape. This insult, madam!—Do myself a mischief!—Madam, don't flatter yourself that it is in your power to make me unhappy; it is not vexation brings me hither, I assure you.

Miss Har. Then, let vexation take you away; we were never designed for one another!

Capt. Cape. My amazement brings me hither!—amazement, that any woman can behave—but I don't want to upbraid; I only come to ask—for I can hardly as yet believe it—I only come to ask, if I am to credit this pretty epistle?

Miss Har. Every syllable: therefore, take your answer, sir, and truce with your importunity.

Capt. Cape. Very well, madam; very well; your humble servant, madam—I promise you, madam, I can repay this scorn with scorn; with tenfold scorn, madam, such as this treatment deserves—that's all—I say no more—your servant, madam; but let me ask you, is this a just return for all the attendance I have paid you these three years past?

Miss Har. Perfectly just, sir. Three years! how could you be a dangler so long? I told you what it would come to; can you think, that raising a woman's expectation, and tiring her out of all patience, is the way to make sure of her at last? you ought to have been a brisker lover; you ought, indeed, sir! I am now contracted to another, and so there is an end of every thing between us.

Capt. Cape. Very well, madam—and yet, I can't bear to be despised by her—and, can you, Miss Harlow, can you find it in your heart to treat me with this disdain? have you no compassion?

Miss Har. No; positively, none, sir; none, none.

Capt. Cape. Your own Captain Cape, whom you——

Miss Har. Whom I despise!

Capt. Cape. Whom you have so often encouraged to adore you!

Miss Har. Pray, sir, don't touch my hand; I am now the property of another!

Capt. Cape. Can't you still break off with him?

Miss Har. No, sir, I can't, I won't. I love him; and, sir, if you are a man of honour, you will speak to me no more; desist, sir! for if you don't, my brother shall tell you of it, sir, and to-morrow Mr Clerimont shall tell you of it.

Capt. Cape. Mr Clerimont, madam, shall fight me, for daring——

Miss Har. And must I fight you, too, most noble, valiant captain?

Capt. Cape. Laughed at, too!

Miss Har. What a passion you are in! I can't bear to see a man in such a passion—Oh! I have a happy riddance of you; the violence of your temper is dreadful; I won't stay a moment longer with you; you frighten me; you have your answer; and so, your servant, sir.

[*Exit* MISS HAR.

Capt. Cape. Ay! she is gone off like a fury; and the furies catch her, say I! I will never put up with this; I will find out this Mr Clerimont, and he shall be accountable to me; Mr Harlow, too, shall be accountable to me.

Enter MR *and* MRS HARLOW.

Mr Harlow, I am used very ill here, sir, by all of you, and sir, let me tell you——

Mr Har. Nay, don't be angry with me, sir! I was not to marry you.

Capt. Cape. But, sir, I can't help being angry; I must be angry; and, let me tell you, you don't behave like a gentleman.

Mrs Har. How can Mr Harlow help it, sir, if my sister——

Mr Har. You are too warm; you are indeed, sir; let us both talk this matter over a bottle.

Capt. Cape. No, sir; no bottle; over a cannon, if you will.

Mrs Har. Mercy on me, sir! I beg you won't talk in that terrible manner; you frighten me, sir.

Mr Har. Be you quiet, my dear---Capt. Cape, I beg you will just step into that room with me; and if, in the dispatching one bottle, I don't acquit myself of all sinister dealing, why, then---come, come, be a little moderate; you shall step with me; I'll take it as a favour; come, come, you must.

Capt. Cape. I always found you a gentleman, Mr Harlow; and so, with all my heart; I don't care if I do talk the matter over with you.

Mr Har. Sir, I am obliged to you; I'll shew you the way.

[*Exeunt* MR HAR. *and* CAPT. CAPE.

Mrs Har. It is just as I foresaw; my sister was sure of him, and now is she going to break off for a young man that will despise her in a little time; I wish she would have Capt. Cape!

Enter MISS HARLOW.

Miss Har. Is he gone, sister?

Mrs Har. No; and here is the deuce and all to do; he is for fighting every body. Upon my word, you are wrong; you don't behave genteelly in the affair.

Miss Har. Genteelly! I like that notion prodigiously! an't I going to marry genteelly?

Mrs Har. Well, follow your own inclinations; I won't intermeddle any more, I promise you; I'll step into the parlour, and see what they are about. [*Exit* MRS HAR.

Miss Har. As you please, madam. I see plainly the ill-natured thing can't bear my success. Heavens! here comes Mr Clerimont!

Enter MR CLERIMONT.

Miss Har. You are earlier than I expected, sir.

Cle. I have flown, madam, upon the wings of love; I have seen my uncle, and he will be here within this half hour; every thing succeeds to my wishes with him! I hope there is no alteration here, madam, since I saw you?

Miss Har. Nothing that signifies, sir.

Cle. You alarm me! Mr Harlow has not changed his mind, I hope?

Miss Har. No, sir; he continues in the same mind.

Cle. And your sister? I tremble with doubt and fear! she does not surely recede from the sentiments she flattered me with?

Miss Har. Why, there, indeed, I can't say much—she—

Cle. How?

Miss Har. She—I don't know what to make of her.

Cle. Oh! I am on the rack! in pity, do not torture me!

Miss Har. How tremblingly solicitous he is! Oh! I have made a sure conquest! [*Aside.*] Why she, sir!—

Cle. Ay! [*Disconcerted.*

Miss Har. She does not seem entirely to approve.

Cle. You kill me with despair.

Miss Har. Oh! he is deeply smitten. [*Aside.*] She thinks another match would suit better.

Cle. Another match!

Miss Har. Yes, another; an India captain, who has made his proposals; but I shall take care to see him dismissed.

Cle. Will you?

Miss Har. I promise you I will—though he runs much in my sister's head, and she has taken pains to bring my other relations over to her opinion.

Cle. Oh! cruel, cruel!—I could not have expected that from her—but has she fixed her heart upon a match with this other gentleman?

Miss Har. Why, truly I think she has—but my will in this affair must be, and shall be consulted.

Cle. And so it ought, madam—your long acquaintance with the world, madam—

Miss Har. Long acquaintance, sir! I have but a few years experience only—

Cle. That is, your good sense, madam—oh! confound my tongue! how that slipt from me, [*Aside.*]—your good sense—your early good sense—and—and—inclination should be consulted.

Miss Har. And they shall, sir—hark!—I hear her—I'll tell you what—I'll leave you this opportunity to speak to her once more, and try to win her over by persuasion—It will make things easy, if you can—I am gone, sir.

[*Curtsies affectedly, and Exit.*

Cle. The happiness of my life will be owing to you, madam.—The woman is really better natured than I thought she was—she comes! the lovely tyrant comes!——

Enter MRS HARLOW.

Cle. She triumphs in her cruelty, and I am ruined—— [*Aside.*

Mrs Har. You seem afflicted, sir—I hope no misfortune—

Cle. The severest misfortune!——you have broke my heart—

Mrs Har. I break you heart, sir?—

Cle. Yes, cruel fair—you—you have undone me.

Mrs Har. You amaze me, sir! pray, how can I—

Cle. And you can seem unconscious of the mischief you have made—

Mrs Har. Pray unriddle, sir——

Cle. Madam, your sister has told me all—

Mrs Har. Ha, ha! what has she told you, sir?

Cle. It may be sport to you—but, to me, 'tis death—

Mrs Har. What is death?

Cle. The gentleman from India, madam—I have heard it all—you can give him a preference—you can blast my hopes——my fond delighted hopes, which you yourself had cherished.

Mrs Har. The gentleman is a very good sort of man.

Cle. Oh! she loves him, I see—[*Aside.*—Madam, I perceive my doom is fixed, and fixed by you—

Mrs Har. How have I fixed your doom?—if I speak favourably of captain Cape, he deserves it, sir.

Cle. Oh! heavens! I cannot bear this—
[*Aside.*

Mrs Har. I believe there is nobody that knows the gentleman, but will give him his due praise—

Cle. Love, love, love! [*Aside.*

Mrs Har. And besides, his claim is in fact prior to yours.

Cle. And must love be governed, like the business of mechanics, by the laws of tyrant custom?—Can you think so, madam?

Mrs Har. Why, sir, you know I am not in love.

Cle. Oh! cruel!—no, madam, I see you are not.

Mrs Har. And really now, sir, reasonably speaking, my sister is for treating captain Cape very ill—He has been dancing attendance here these three years——

Cle. Yet that you knew, when you were pleased to fan the rising flame, that matchless beauty had kindled in my heart.

Mrs Har. Matchless beauty!—ha, ha!—I cannot but laugh at that—
[*Aside.*

Cle. Laugh, madam, if you will, at the pangs you yourself occasion—yes, triumph, if you will—I am resigned to my fate, since you will have it so—

Mrs Har. I have it so!—you seem to frighten yourself without cause—If I speak favourably of any body else, sir,—what then?—I am not to marry him, you know.

Cle. An't you?

Mrs Har. I!—no, truly; thank heaven!—

Cle. She revives me. [*Aside.*

Mrs Har. That must be as my sister pleases.

Cle. Must it?

Mrs Har. Must it?—to be sure it must!

Cle. And may I hope some interest in your heart?

Mrs Har. My heart, sir!

Cle. While it is divided, while another has possession of but part of it.—

Mrs Har. I don't understand him!—Why, it has been given away long ago.

Cle. I pray you do not tyrannize me thus with alternate doubts and fears—if you will but bless me with the least kind return——

Mrs Har. Kind return! what, would you have me fall in love with you?

Cle. It will be generous to him who adores you.

Mrs Har. Adores me!

Cle. Even to idolatry.

Mrs Har. What can he mean?—I thought my sister was the object of your adoration.

Cle. Your sister, madam! I shall ever respect her as my friend on this occasion; but love—no—no—she is no object for that——

Mrs Har. No!

Cle. She may have been handsome in her time, but that has been all over long ago——

Mrs Har. Well! this is charming! I wish she heard him now, with her new-fangled airs, [*Aside.*]—But let me understand you, sir; adore me!

Cle. You, you! and only you! by this fair hand—[*Kisses it.*]

Mrs Har. Hold, hold! this is going too far; but pray, sir, have you really conceived a passion for me?

Cle. You know I have; a passion of the tenderest nature.

Mrs Har. And was that your drift in coming hither?

Cle. What else could induce me?

Mrs Har. And introduced yourself here, to have an opportunity of speaking to me?

Cle. My angel! don't torment me thus—

Mrs Har. Angel! and pray, sir, what do you suppose Mr Harlow will say to this?

Cle. Oh! madam—he! he approves my passion.

Mrs Har. Does he really?—I must speak to him about that—

Cle. Do so, madam, you will find I am a man of more honour than to deceive you—

Mrs Har. Well! it will be whimsical if he does; and my sister, too; this will be a charming discovery for her! [*Aside.*]—Ha, ha! well! really sir, this is mighty odd; I'll speak to Mr Harlow about this matter this very moment——
[*Going.*

Cle. Oh! you will find it all true—and may I then flatter myself—

Mrs Har. Oh! to be sure—such an honourable project—I'll step to him this moment—and then, sister, I shall make such a piece of work for you— [*Exit.*

Cle. Very well, madam—see Mr Harlow immediately—he will confirm it to you—while there is life there is hope—such matchless beauty!—

Enter MISS HARLOW.

Miss Har. I beg your pardon, sir, for leav-

ing you all this time—Well, what says my sister?

Cle. She has given me some glimmering of hope.

Miss Har. Well, don't be uneasy about her—it shall be as I please—

Cle. But with her own free consent it would be better—however, to you I am bound by every tie, and thus let me seal a vow—[*Kisses her hand.*]

Miss Har. He certainly is a very passionate lover—Lord! he is ready to eat my hand up with kisses—I wish my sister saw this—[*Aside.*] Hush! I hear captain Cape's voice—the hideous tramontane!—he is coming this way—I would not see him again for the world—I'll withdraw a moment, sir—you'll excuse me, Mr Clerimont—[*Kisses her hand, and curtsies very low.*] your servant, sir—Oh! he is a charming man.

[*Curtsies, and exit.*

Enter CAPTAIN CAPE.

Capt. Cape. There she goes, the perfidious! Sir, I understand your name is Clerimont—

Cle. At your service, sir.

Capt. Cape. Then, sir, draw this moment.

Cle. Draw, sir! for what?

Capt. Cape. No evasion, sir.

Cle. Explain the cause.

Capt. Cape. The cause is too plain—your making love to that lady, who went out there this moment——

Cle. That lady! not I, upon my honour, sir.

Capt. Cape. No shuffling, sir—draw———

Cle. Sir, I can repel an injury like this—but your quarrel is groundless—and, sir, if ever I made love to that lady, I will lay my bosom naked to your sword. That lady!—I resign all manner of pretension to her—

Capt. Cape. You resign her, sir?

Cle. Entirely.

Capt. Cape. Then I am pacified.

[*Puts up his sword.*

Cle. Upon my word, sir, I never so much as thought of the lady.

Enter MR HARLOW.

Mr Har. So, sir! fine doings you have been carrying on here——

Cle. Sir!

Mr Har. You have been attempting my wife, I find———

Cle. Upon my word, Mr Harlow———

Mr Har. You have behaved in a very base manner, and I insist upon satisfaction; draw, sir—

Cle. This is the strangest accident!—I assure you, sir—only give me leave———

Mr Har. I will not give you leave—I insist—

Capt. Cape. Nay, nay, Mr Harlow—this is neither time or place—and besides, hear the gentleman; I have been over-hasty, and he has satisfied me—only hear him—

Mr Har. Sir, I will believe my own wife—come on, sir.

Cle. I assure you, Mr Harlow, I came into this house upon honourable principles—induced, sir, by my regard for Miss Harlow.

Capt. Cape. For Miss Harlow!—zoons, draw!

Cle. Again! this is downright madness; two upon me at once! you will murder me between you.

Mr Har. There is one too many upon him, sure enough; and so, captain, put up.

Capt. Cape. Resign your pretensions to Miss Harlow.

Cle. Resign Miss Harlow! not for the universe! in her cause I can be as ready as any bravo of ye all. [*Draws his sword.*

Mr Har. For Heaven's sake! Captain Cape! do moderate your anger—this is neither time or place—I have been too rash myself—I beg you will be pacified—[*He puts up.*]—Mr Clerimont, sheath your sword.

Cle. I obey, sir.

Mr Har. Captain Cape, how can you? You promised me you would let things take their course; if my sister will marry the gentleman, how is he to blame?

Capt. Cape. Very well, sir; I have done; she is a worthless woman, that's all.

Cle. A worthless woman, sir!

Capt. Cape. Ay; worthless——

Cle. Damnation! draw, sir!

Mr Har. Nay, nay, Mr Clerimont, you are too warm; and there's a gentleman coming—this is your uncle, I suppose?

Cle. It is.

Enter MR HEARTWELL.

Mr Har. I'll wave all disputes, now, that I may conclude my sister's marriage. [*Aside.*

Cle. Mr Heartwell, sir—Mr Harlow, sir.

Heart. My nephew has informed me, sir, of the honour you have done him, and I am come to give my consent.

Mr Har. I thought it necessary, sir, to have the advice of Mr Clerimont's friends, as he is very young, and my sister not very handsome.

Cle. She is an angel, sir!

Heart. Patience, Charles, patience. My nephew's estate will provide for his eldest born; and upon the younger branches of his marriage, I mean to settle my fortune.

Mr Har. Generously spoken, sir; and so there is no occasion for delay—who waits there? tell the ladies they are wanting———

Heart. I have ever loved my nephew, and since he tells me he has made a good choice, I shall be glad to see him happy.

Capt. Cape. But, sir, let me tell you, that your nephew has used me very basely, and, sir———

Mr Har. Nay, nay, captain, this is wrong, now; every thing was settled between us in the other room; recollect yourself; do, I beg you will—Oh, here come the ladies.

Enter MRS *and* MISS HARLOW.

Miss Har. Now, sister, you shall see I have completed my conquest———

Cle. Now, then, I am happy indeed; my lovely, charming bride, thus let me snatch you to my heart, and thus, and thus—[*Embraces* MRS HARLOW.]

Mr Har. Zoons! Before my face!—[*Pushing him away.*]

Cle. Prithee, indulge my transport; my life, my angel!

Mr Har. I desire you will desist, sir—

Cle. Nay, nay; prithee, be quiet—my charming, charming wife!

Mr Har. That lady is not your wife—

Cle. How! my wife! not my wife! ecstacy and bliss!

Mr Har. Come, come, sir———this is too much——

Cle. Ha, ha! You are very pleasant, sir.

Mr Har. Zoons! sir, no trifling; that lady is my wife.

Cle. Sir!

Mr Har. I say, sir, that lady is my wife!

Capt. Cape. Ha, ha! I see through this—it is a comedy of errors, I believe! [*Sings.*

Heart. What does all this mean?

Cle. Your wife, sir!

Mr Har. Yes, my wife; and there is my sister, if you please to take her.

Cle. Sir!

Mr Har. Sir, this is the lady whom you have desired in marriage.

Cle. Who, I, sir? I beg your pardon; that lady I took to be your wife—[*Pointing to* MISS HAR.]—and that lady—[*Pointing to* MRS HAR.]—I took to be your sister.

Capt. Cape. } Ha, ha, ha!
Mrs Har. }

Miss Har. Lord! lord! have I been made a fool of all this time! furies! torture! murder!

Capt. Cape. Ha, ha! my lady fair is taken in, I think.

Mrs Har. Sister, the men don't see with my eyes—ha, ha!

Capt. Cape. Ha, ha! the gentleman is no dangler, madam.

Mrs Har. This is a complete conquest my sister has made——

Miss Har. I can't bear this! sir, I desire I may not be made a jest of; did not you solicit me? importune me?

Cle. For your interest in that lady, madam, whom I took for Miss Harlow; I beg your pardon if I am mistaken; I hope there is no harm done.

Miss Har. Yes, sir, but there is harm done; I am made sport of—exposed to derision—Oh! I cannot bear this—I cannot bear it— [*Cries.*

Mrs Har. Don't cry, sister—some faces preserve the bloom longer than others, you know—Ha, ha!

Capt. Cape. Loll toll loll!

Heart. I don't understand all this; is that lady your wife, sir?

Mr Har. She is, sir.

Heart. And pray, nephew, you took that lady for Mr Harlow's sister, I suppose?

Cle. I did, sir. I beg pardon for the trouble I have given; I am in such confusion, I can hardly——

Heart. Well, well, the thing is cleared up, and there is no harm done; but you should have known what ground you went upon—ha, ha! I can't help laughing, neither.

Mr Har. Why, faith, nor I; ha, ha!

Cle. Since matters have turned so unexpectedly, I beg pardon for my mistake, and, sir, I take my leave. [*Going.*

Miss Har. And will you treat me in this manner, sir? Will you draw me into such a scrape, and not——

Cle. Madam, that gentleman would cut my throat——his claim is prior to mine——and, I dare say, he will be very glad to be reconciled, madam.

Miss Har. You are a base man, then, and I reject you; captain Cape, I see my error, sir, and I resign myself to you.

Capt. Cape. No, madam, I beg to be excused! I have been a dangler too long; I ought to have been a brisker lover; I shall endeavour to survive it, madam—I won't do myself a mischief——and I have my answer—I am off, madam—loll toll loll!

Mrs Har. Ha, ha! I told you this, my dear sister———

Cle. Madam, I dare say the gentleman will think better of it: Mr Harlow, I am sorry for all this confusion, and I beg pardon of the whole company for my mistake—Mrs Harlow, I wish you all happiness, madam—angelic creature! what a misfortune to lose her!

[*Bows, and exit.*

Capt. Cape. And I will follow his example; Miss Harlow, I wish you all happiness—angelic creature! what a misfortune to lose her! upon my soul, I think you a most admirable jilt, and so now you may go, and bewail your virginity in the mountains—loll toll loll! [*Exit* CAPT. CAPE.

Miss Har. Oh! oh! I can't bear to be treated in this manner! I'll go and hide myself from the world for ever—Oh! oh! the men are all savages, barbarians, monsters, and I hate the whole sex—Oh! oh!—[*Cries bitterly.*]

[*Exit* MISS HAR.

Mrs Har. My dear sister, with her beauty and her conquests, ha, ha!

Har. Ha, ha! very whimsical and ridiculous———

Heart. Sir, my nephew is young—I am sorry for this scene of errors, and I hope you will ascribe the whole to his inexperience.

Mr Har. I certainly shall, sir.

Mrs Har. I cautioned my sister sufficiently about this matter; but vanity got the better of her, and leaves her now a whimsical instance of folly and affectation.

In vain the faded Toast her mirror tries,
And counts the cruel murders of her eyes;
For Ridicule, sly peeping o'er her head,
Will point the roses and the lilies dead;
And while, fond soul! she weaves her myrtle chain,
She proves a subject of the comic strain.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE CITIZEN.

BY

MURPHY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
OLD PHILPOT, *the Citizen.*	MARIA, *attached to* BEAUFORT.
YOUNG PHILPOT, *his son.*	CORINNA, *a lady of pleasure.*
SIR JASPER WILDING, *father to* MARIA.	
YOUNG WILDING, *his son.*	
BEAUFORT, *in love with* MARIA.	
DAPPER, *a stock-broker.*	
QUILLDRIVE, *clerk to* OLD PHILPOT.	

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A room in* SIR JASPER WILDING'S *house.*

YOUNG WILDING, BEAUFORT, *and* WILL *following.*

Wild. Ha, ha! my dear Beaufort! A fiery young fellow like you, melted down into a sighing, love-sick dangler after a high heel, a well-turned ancle, and a short petticoat!

Beau. Prithee, Wilding, don't laugh at me—Maria's charms——

Wild. Maria's charms! and so now you would fain grow wanton in her praise, and have me listen to your raptures about my own sister? Ha, ha! poor Beaufort!——Is my sister at home, Will?

Will. She is, sir.

Wild. How long has my father been gone out?

Will. This hour, sir.

Wild. Very well. Pray, give Mr Beaufort's compliments to my sister, and he is come to wait upon her. [*Exit* WILL.] You will be glad to see her, I suppose, Charles?

Beau. I live but in her presence!

Wild. Live but in her presence! How the devil could the young baggage raise this riot in your heart? 'Tis more than her brother could ever do with any of her sex.

Beau. Nay, you have no reason to complain; you are come up to town, post-haste, to marry a wealthy citizen's daughter, who only saw you last season at Tunbridge, and has been languishing for you ever since.

Wild. 'Tis more than I do for her; and, to tell you the truth, more than I believe she does for me: This is a match of prudence, man! bargain and sale! My reverend dad and the old put of a citizen finished the business at Lloyd's coffee-house by inch of candle—a mere transferring of property!—'Give your son to my daughter, and 'I will give my daughter to your son.' That's

him hate you for a fool, and so let the refusal come from himself.

Maria. But how? how, my dear brother? Tell me how?

Wild. Why, you have seen a play, with me, where a man pretends to be a downright country oaf, in order to rule a wife, and have a wife?

Maria. Very well. What then? what then? Oh! I have it; I understand you; say no more; 'tis charming! I like it of all things! I'll do it, I will; and I will so plague him, that he shan't know what to make of me. He shall be a very toad-eater to me! the sour, the sweet, the bitter, he shall swallow all, and all shall work upon him alike for my diversion. Say nothing of it; 'tis all among ourselves; but I won't be cruel. I hate ill-nature; and then, who knows but I may like him?

Beau. My dear Maria, don't talk of liking him.

Maria. Oh! now you are beginning again.

[*Sings* Voi Amanti, &c. *and exit.*

Beau. 'Sdeath, Wilding, I shall never be your brother-in-law at this rate!

Wild. Psha, follow me: don't be apprehensive. I'll give her farther instructions, and she will execute them, I warrant you: the old fellow's daughter shall be mine, and the son may go shift for himself elsewhere.

SCENE II.—*A room in* OLD PHILPOT'S *house.*

Enter OLD PHILPOT, DAPPER, *and* QUILLDRIVE.

Old Phil. Quildrive, have those dollars been sent to the bank, as I ordered?

Quill. They have, sir.

Old Phil. Very well. Mr Dapper, I am not fond of writing any thing of late; but at your request——

Dap. You know I would not offer you a bad policy.

Old Phil. I believe it. Well, step with me to my closet, and I will look at your policy. How much do you want upon it?

Dap. Three thousand: you had better take the whole; there are very good names upon it.

Old Phil. Well, well, step with me, and I'll talk to you. Quilldrive, step with those bills for acceptance. This way, Mr Dapper, this way.

[*Exeunt.*

Quill. A miserly old rascal! digging, digging money out of the very hearts of mankind; constantly scraping together, and yet trembling with anxiety for fear of coming to want. A canting, old hypocrite! and yet under his veil of sanctity he has a liquorish tooth left—running to the other end of the town slyly every evening; and there he has his solitary pleasures in holes and corners.

GEORGE PHILPOT, *peeping in.*

G. Phil. Hist, hist! Quilldrive!

Quill. Ha, Mr George!

G. Phil. Is Square-toes at home?

Quill. He is.

G. Phil. Has he asked for me?

Quill. He has.

G. Phil. [*Walks in on tip-toe.*] Does he know I did not lie at home?

Quill. No; I sunk that upon him.

G. Phil. Well done! I'll give you a choice gelding to carry you to Dulwich of a Sunday—Damnation! Up all night, stripped of nine hundred pounds; pretty well for one night! Piqued, repiqued, flammed, and capotted every deal!—Old Drybeard shall pay all—Is forty-seven good? No—fifty good? No, no—to the end of the chapter. Cruel luck! Damn me, 'tis life though!—this is life! 'Sdeath, I hear him coming! [*Runs off, and peeps.*]—no, all's safe—I must not be caught in these clothes, Quilldrive.

Quill. How came it you did not leave them at Madam Corinna's, as you generally do?

G. Phil. I was afraid of being too late for Old Square-toes; and so I whipt into a hackney-coach, and drove with the windows up, as if I was afraid of a bum-bailiff. Pretty clothes, an't they?

Quill. Ah! sir——

G. Phil. Reach me one of my mechanic city-frocks—no—stay—'tis in the next room, an't it?

Quill. Yes, sir.

G. Phil. I'll run and slip it on in a twinkle.

[*Exit.*

Quill. Mercy on us! what a life does he lead! Old Codger within here will scrape together for him, and the moment young master comes to possession, 'Ill got, ill gone,' I warrant me: a hard card I have to play between them both; drudging for the old man, and pimping for the young one. The father is a reservoir of riches, and the son is a fountain to play it all away in vanity and folly!

Re-enter GEORGE PHILPOT.

G. Phi. Now I'm equipped for the city—Damn the city!—I wish the papishes would set fire to it again——I hate to be beating the hoof here among them—Here comes father—no——'tis Dapper——Quilldrive, I'll give you the gelding.

Quill. Thank you, sir. [*Exit.*

Enter DAPPER.

Dap. Why, you look like a devil, George.

G. Phi. Yes; I have been up all night, lost all my money, and I'm afraid I must smash for it.

Dap. Smash for it——what have I let you into the secret for? have not I advised you to trade upon your own account——and you feel the sweets of it.——How much do you owe in the city?

G. Phil. At least twenty thousand.

Dap. Poh, that's nothing! Bring it up to fifty or sixty thousand, and then give them a good crash at once——I have insured the ship for you.

G. Phil. Have you?

Dap. The policy's full; I have just touched your father for the last three thousand.

G. Phil. Excellent! Are the goods re-landed?

Dap. Every bale——I have had them up to town, and sold them all to a packer for you.

G. Phil. Bravo! and the ship is loaded with rubbish, I suppose?

Dap. Yes; and is now proceeding on the voyage.

G. Phil. Very well—and to-morrow, or next day, we shall hear of her being lost upon the Goodwin, or sunk between the Needles?

Dap. Certainly.

G. Phil. Admirable! and then we shall come upon the underwriters?

Dap. Directly.

G. Phil. My dear Dapper!

[*Embraces him.*

Dap. Yes; I do a dozen every year. How do you think I can live as I do, otherwise?

G. Phil. Very true; shall you be at the club after 'Change?

Dap. Without fail.

G. Phil. That's right! it will be a full meeting: we shall have Nat Pigtail the dry-salter, there, and Bob Reptile the change-broker, and Sobersides the banker—we shall all be there. We shall have deep doings.

Dap. Yes, yes. Well, a good morning; I must go now, and fill up a policy for a ship that has been lost these three days.

G. Phil. My dear Dapper! thou art the best of friends.

Dap. Ay, I'll stand by you—It will be time enough for you to break, when you see your father near his end; then give them a smash; put yourself at the head of his fortune, and begin the world again—Good morning. [*Exit* DAP.

G. Phil. Dapper, adieu!—Who now, in my situation, would envy any of your great folks at the court-end? a lord has nothing to depend upon but his estate——He can't spend you a hundred thousand pounds of other peoples money—no, no—I had rather be a little bobwig citizen in good credit, than a commissioner of the customs—Commissioner!—The king has not so good a thing in his gift, as a commission of bankruptcy—Don't we see them all with their country-seats at Hogsdon, and at Kentish-town, and at Newington-butts, and at Islington? with their little flying Mercuries, tipt on the top of the house, their Apollos, their Venuses, and their leaden Hercules's in the garden; and themselves sitting before the door, with pipes in their mouths, waiting for a good digestion—Zoons! here comes old dad. Now for a few dry maxims of left-hand ed wisdom, to prove myself a scoundrel in sentiment, and pass in his eyes for a hopeful young man, likely to do well in the world.

Enter OLD PHILPOT.

Old Phil. Twelve times twelve is 144.

G. Phil. I'll attack him in his own way—Commission at two and a half *per cent*—hum!

Old Phil. There he is, intent upon business! what, plodding, George?

G. Phil. Thinking a little of the main chance, sir.

Old Phil. That's right: it is a wide world, George.

G. Phil. Yes, sir; but you instructed me early in the rudiments of trade.

Old Phil. Ay, ay! I instilled good principles into thee.

G. Phil. So you did, sir—Principal and interest is all I ever heard from him [*Aside.*]. I shall never forget the story you recommended to my earliest notice, sir.

Old Phil. What was that, George? It is quite out of my head.

G. Phil. It intimated, sir, how Mr Thomas Inkle of London, merchant, was cast away, and was afterwards protected by a young lady, who grew in love with him, and how he afterwards bargained with a planter to sell her for a slave.

Old Phil. Ay, ay, [*Laughs.*] I recollect it now.

G. Phil. And when she pleaded being with child by him, he was no otherwise moved than to raise his price, and make her turn to better account.

Old Phil. [*Bursts into a laugh.*] I remember it—ha, ha! there was the very spirit of trade! ay, ay; ha, ha!

G. Phil. That was calculation for you——

Old Phil. Ay, ay!

G. Phil. The Rule of Three—If one gives me so much, what will two give me?

Old Phil. Ay, ay! [*Laughs.*

G. Phil. That was a hit, sir!

Old Phil. Ay, ay!

G. Phil. That was having his wits about him.

Old Phil. Ay, ay! it is a lesson for all young men. It was a hit indeed, ha, ha?

[*Both laugh.*

G. Phil. What an old negro it is! [*Aside.*

Old Phil. Thou art a son after my own heart, George.

G. Phil. Trade must be minded—A penny saved, is a penny got——

Old Phil. Ay, ay!

[*Shakes his head, and looks cunning.*

G. Phil. He that hath money in his purse, won't want a head on his shoulders.

Old Phil. Ay, ay!

G. Phil. Rome was not built in a day—Fortunes are made by degrees—Pains to get, care to keep, and fear to lose——

Old Phil. Ay, ay!

G. Phil. He that lies in bed, his estate feels it.

Old Phil. Ay, ay; the good boy!

G. Phil. The old curmudgeon [*Aside.*] thinks nothing mean that brings in an honest penny.

Old Phil. The good boy! George, I have great hopes of thee.

G. Phil. Thanks to your example; you have taught me to be cautious in this wide world—Love your neighbour, but don't pull down your hedge.

Old Phil. I profess it is a wise saying; I never heard it before: it is a wise saying; and shows how cautious we should be of too much confidence in friendship.

G. Phil. Very true.

Old Phil. Friendship has nothing to do with trade.

G. Phil. It only draws a man in to lend money.

Old Phil. Ay, ay——

G. Phil. There was your neighbour's son, Dick Worthy, who was always cramming his head with Greek and Latin at school; he wanted to borrow of me the other day; but I was too cunning.

Old Phil. Ay, ay—Let him draw bills of exchange in Greek and Latin, and see where he will get a pound sterling for them.

G. Phil. So I told him—I went to him to his garret in the Minories; and there I found him in all his misery! and a fine scene it was—There was his wife in a corner of the room, at a washing tub, up to the elbows in suds; a solitary pork-steak was dangling by a pack-thread before a melancholy fire; himself seated at a three legged table, writing a pamphlet against the German war; a child upon his left knee, his right leg employed in rocking a cradle with a bratling in it.—And so there was business enough for them all—His wife rubbing away, [*Mimicks a washerwoman;*] and he writing on. 'The 'king of Prussia shall have no more subsidies '—Saxony shall be indemnified——He shan't 'have a foot in Silesia.' There is a sweet little baby! [*To the child on his knee.*]—then he rocked the cradle, hush ho! hush ho!—then twisted the grisken [*Snaps his fingers.*] hush ho! 'the Russians shall have Prussia,' [*Writes.*] The wife [*Washes and sings.*] He—'There's a 'dear.' Round goes the grisken again—[*Snaps 'his fingers;*] 'and Canada must be restored,' [*Writes.*]—And so you have a picture of the whole family.

Old Phil. Ha, ha! What becomes of his Greek and Latin now? Fine words butter no parsnips—He had no money from you, I suppose, George?

G. Phil. Oh! no; Charity begins at home, says I.

Old Phil. And it was wisely said—I have an excellent saying, when any man wants to borrow of me—I am ready with my joke—'A fool and 'his money are soon parted'—ha, ha ha!

G. Phil. Ha, ha———An old skin-flint! [*Aside.*

Old Phil. Ay, ay——a fool and his money are soon parted——ha, ha, ha!

G. Phil. Now, if I can wring a handsome sum out of him, it will prove the truth of what he says. [*Aside.*] And yet trade has its inconveniences——Great houses stopping payment!

Old Phil. Hey—what! you look chagrined ——Nothing of that sort has happened to thee, I hope?

G. Phil. A great house at Cadiz—Don John de Alvarada—The Spanish galleons not making quick returns—and so my bills are come back.

Old Phil. Ay!—— [*Shakes his head.*

G. Phil. I have, indeed, a remittance from Messina. That voyage yields me thirty per cent. profit—but this blow coming upon me——

Old Phil. Why, this is unlucky——how much money?

G. Phil. Three-and-twenty hundred.

Old Phil. George, too many eggs in one basket! I'll tell thee, George; I expect sir Jasper Wilding here presently to conclude the treaty of marriage I have on foot for thee: then hush this up; say nothing of it; and in a day or two you pay these bills with his daughter's portion.

G. Phil. The old rogue [*Aside.*]! That will never do; I shall be blown upon 'Change——Alvarada will pay in time—He has opened his affairs—He appears a good man.

Old Phil. Does he?

G. Phil. A great fortune left! will pay in time, but I must crack before that.

Old Phil. It is unlucky! a good man you say he is?

G. Phil. Nobody better.

Old Phil. Let me see———Suppose I lend this money?

G. Phil. Ah, sir!

Old Phil. How much is your remittance from Messina?

G. Phil. Seven hundred and fifty.

Old Phil. Then you want fifteen hundred and fifty?

G. Phil. Exactly.

Old Phil. Don Alvarada is a good man, you say?

G. Phil. Yes, sir.

Old Phil. I will venture to lend the money—you must allow me commission upon those bills for taking them up for honour of the drawer?

G. Phil. Agreed.

Old Phil. Lawful interest, while I am out of my money?

G. Phil. I subscribe.

Old Phil. A power of attorney to receive the

monies from Alvarada, when he makes a payment?

G. Phil. You shall have it.

Old Phil. Your own bond?

G. Phil. To be sure.

Old Phil. Go and get me a check—You shall have a draught on the bank.

G. Phil. Yes, sir. [*Going.*

Old Phil. But stay—I had forgot—I must sell out for this; stocks are under *par*. You must pay the difference.

G. Phil. Was ever such a leech! [*Aside.*] By all means, sir.

Old Phil. Step and get me a check.

G. Phil. A fool and his money are soon parted. [*Aside.*

[*Exit* G. PHILPOT.

Old Phil. What with commission, lawful interest, and his paying the difference of the stocks, which are higher now than when I bought in, this will be no bad morning's work: and then in the evening I shall be in the rarest spirits for this new adventure I am recommended to—Let me see—what is the lady's name? [*Takes a letter out.*] Corinna! ay, ay, by the description, she is a bale of goods; I shall be in rare spirits. Ay, this is the way, to indulge one's passions and yet conceal them, and to mind one's business in the city, here, as if one had no passions at all; I long for the evening, methinks—Body o' me, I am a young man still!

Enter QUILLDRIVE.

Quill. Sir Jasper Wilding, sir, and his daughter.

Old Phil. I am at home.

Enter SIR JASPER *and* MARIA.—SIR JASPER, *dressed as a fox-hunter, and singing.*

Old Phil. Sir Jasper, your very humble servant.

Sir Jas. Master Philpot, I be glad to zee ye; I am, indeed.

Old Phil. The like compliment to you, sir Jasper. Miss Maria, I kiss your fair hand.

Maria. Sir, your most obedient.

Sir Jas. Ay, ay, I ha' brought un to zee you—There's my girl; I ben't ashamed of my girl.

Maria. That's more than I can say of my father; luckily, these people are as much strangers to decorum as my old gentleman, otherwise this visit from a lady to meet her lover would have an odd appearance——though but late a boarding-school girl, I know enough of the world for that. [*Aside.*

Old Phil. Truly, she is a blooming young lady, sir Jasper, and I verily shall like to take an interest in her.

Sir Jas. I ha' brought her to zee ye, and zo your zon may ha' her as soon as he will.

Old Phil. Why, she looks three and a half per cent. better than when I saw her last.

Maria. Then, there are hopes that, in a little time, I shall be above *par*—he rates me like a lottery ticket. [*Aside.*

Old Phil. Ay, ay, I doubt not, sir Jasper: Miss has the appearance of a very sensible, discreet young lady; and to deal freely, without that, she would not do for my son; George is a shrewd lad, and I have often heard him declare no consideration should ever prevail on him to marry a fool.

Maria. Ay, you have told me so before, old gentleman, and I have my cue from my brother; and if I don't soon give master George a surfeit of me, why, then, I am not a notable girl. [*Aside.*

Enter GEORGE PHILPOT.

G. Phil. A good, clever old cuff this; after my own heart; I think I will have his daughter, if 'tis only for the pleasure of hunting with him.

Sir Jas. Zon-in-law, gee us your hand; what zay you? Are you ready for my girl?

G. Phil. Say grace as soon as you will, sir, I'll fall to.

Sir Jas. Well zaid; I like you; I like un, master Philpot; I like un; I'll tell you what, let un talk to her now.

Old Phil. And so he shall; George, she is a bale of goods; speak her fair now, and then you'll be in cash.

G. Phil. I think I had rather not speak to her now——I hate speaking to these modest women, sir—sir, a word in your ear; had not I better break my mind, by advertising for her in a newspaper?

Old Phil. Talk sense to her, George; she is a notable girl; and I'll give the draft upon the bank presently.

Sir Jas. Come along, master Philpot; come along; I ben't afraid of my girl—come along.

[*Exeunt* SIR JASPER *and* OLD PHILPOT.

Maria. A pretty sort of a lover they have found for me. [*Aside.*

G. Phil. How shall I speak my mind to her? She is almost a stranger to me. [*Aside.*

Maria. Now, I'll make the hideous thing hate me, if I can. [*Aside.*

G. Phil. Ay, she is as sharp as a needle, I warrant her. [*Aside.*

Maria. [*Aside.*] When will he begin? Ah, you fright! You rival, Mr Beaufort! I'll give him an aversion to me, that's what I will, and so let him have the trouble of breaking off the match: not a word yet—he is in a fine confusion. [*Looks foolish.*] I think I may as well sit down, sir.

G. Phil. Madam—I—I—I—I'll hand you a chair, madam; there, madam!

[*Bows awkwardly.*

Maria. Sir, I thank you.

G. Phil. I'll sit down, too.

[*In confusion.*

Maria. Heigho!

G. Phil. Madam!

Maria. Sir!

G. Phil. I thought—I—I—did not you say something, madam?

Maria. No, sir; nothing.

G. Phil. I beg your pardon, madam.

Maria. Oh, you are a sweet creature!

[*Aside.*

G. Phil. The ice is broke now; I have begun, and so, I'll go on.

[*Sits silent, looks foolish, and steals a look at her.*

Maria. An agreeable interview this!

[*Aside.*

G. Phil. Pray, madam, do you ever go to concerts?

Maria. Concerts! what's that, sir?

G. Phil. A music meeting.

Maria. I have been at a Quaker's meeting, but never at a music-meeting.

G. Phil. Lord, madam, all the gay world goes to concerts. She notable! I'll take courage; she is nobody. [*Aside.*] Will you give me leave to present you a ticket for the Crown and Anchor, madam?

Maria. [*Looking simple and aukward.*] A ticket! what is a ticket?

G. Phil. There, madam, at your service:

Maria. [*Curtsies aukwardly.*] I long to see what a ticket is:

G. Phil. What a curtsey there is for the St James's end of the town! I hate her; she seems to be an idiot. [*Aside.*

Maria. Here's a charming ticket he has given me. [*Aside.*] And is this a ticket, sir?

G. Phil. Yes, madam; and is this a ticket?

[*Mimicks her aside.*

Maria. [*Reads.*] For sale, by the candle, the following goods; thirty chests, straw-hats; fifty tubs chip-hats; pepper, sago, borax; Ha, ha! such a ticket!

G. Phil. I—I—I have made a mistake, madam———here, here is the right one.

Maria. You need not mind it, sir; I never go to such places.

G. Phil. No, madam? I don't know what to make of her. Was you ever at White-Conduit-house?

Maria. There's a question! [*Aside.*] Is that a nobleman's seat?

G. Phil. [*Laughs.*] Simpleton! No, miss, it is not a nobleman's seat——Lord! 'tis at Islington,

Maria. Lord Islington! I don't know my lord Islington.

G. Phil. The town of Islington.

Maria. I have not the honour of knowing his lordship.

G. Phil. Islington is a town, madam.

Maria. Oh! it's a town?

G. Phil. Yes, madam.

Maria. I am glad of it.

G. Phil. What is she glad of? [*Aside.*

Maria. A pretty husband my papa has chose for me! [*Aside.*

G. Phil. What shall I say to her next? Have you been at the burletta, madam?

Maria. Where?

G. Phil. The burletta.

Maria. Sir, I would have you to know that I am no such person. I go to burlettas! I am not what you take me for.

G. Phil. Madam———

Maria. I am come of good people, sir; and have been properly educated, as a young girl ought to be.

G. Phil. What a damned fool she is! [*Aside.*] The burletta is an opera, madam.

Maria. Opera, sir! I don't know what you mean by this usage——to affront me in this manner!

G. Phil. Affront! I mean quite the reverse, madam; I took you for a connoisseur.

Maria. Who, me a connoisseur, sir! I desire you won't call me such names; I am sure I never so much as thought of such a thing. Sir, I won't be called a connoisseur—I won't—I won't—I won't.

[*Bursts out a crying.*

G. Phil. Madam, I meant no offence. A connoisseur is a virtuoso.

Maria. Don't virtuoso me! I am no virtuoso, sir; I would have you to know it, I am as virtuous a girl as any in England, and I will never be a virtuoso. [*Cries bitterly.*

G. Phil. But, madam, you mistake me quite.

Maria. [*In a passion, and checking her tears, and sobbing.*] Sir, I am come of as virtuous people as any in England—My family was always remarkable for virtue—My mamma was as good a woman as ever was born, and my aunt Bridget [*Sobbing.*] was a virtuous woman, too; and there's my sister Sophy, makes as good and virtuous a wife as any at all. And so, sir, don't call me a virtuoso. I won't be brought here to be treated in this manner—I won't—I won't—I won't: [*Cries bitterly.*

G. Phil. The girl's a natural—So much the better. I'll marry her, and lock her up. [*Aside.*] Madam, upon my word, you misunderstand me.

Maria. Sir, [*Drying her tears.*] I won't be called connoisseur by you or any body. And I am no virtuoso——I would have you to know that.

G. Phil. Madam, connoisseur and virtuoso are words for a person of taste.

Maria. Taste! [*Sobbing.*

G. Phil. Yes, madam.

Maria. And did you mean to say as how I am a person of taste?

G. Phil. Undoubtedly.

Maria. Sir, your most obedient humble servant. Oh, that's another thing. I have a taste, to be sure.

G. Phil. I know you have, madam—O you're a cursed ninny! [*Aside.*

Maria. Yes, I know I have; I can read tolerably, and I begin to write a little.

G. Phil. Upon my word you have made a great progress! What could Old Square-toes mean by passing her upon me for a sensible girl? and what a fool I was to be afraid to speak to her! I'll talk to her openly at once. [*Aside.*] Come, sit down, miss; pray, madam, are you inclined to matrimony?

Maria. Yes, sir.

G. Phil. Are you in love?

Maria. Yes, sir.

G. Phil. Those naturals are always amorous. [*Aside.*] How should you like me?

Maria. Of all things———

G. Phil. A girl without ceremony. [*Aside.*]—Do you love me?

Maria. Yes, sir.

G. Phil. But you don't love any body else?

Maria. Yes, sir.

G. Phil. Frank and free. [*Aside.*] But not so well as me?

Maria. Yes, sir.

G. Phil. Better, may be?

Maria. Yes, sir.

G. Phil. The devil you do! [*Aside.*] And, perhaps, if I should marry you, I should have a chance to be made a———

Maria. Yes, sir!

G. Phil. The case is clear; Miss Maria, your very humble servant; you are not for my money, I promise you.

Maria. Sir!

G. Phil. I have done, madam, that's all; and I take my leave.

Maria. But you'll marry me?

G. Phil. No, madam, no; no such thing—— You may provide yourself a husband elsewhere: I am your humble servant.

Maria. Not marry me, Mr Philpot? But you must—My papa said you must—and I will have you.

G. Phil. There's another proof of her nonsense! [*Aside.*] Make yourself easy, for I shall have nothing to do with you.

Maria. Not marry me, Mr Philpot? [*Bursts out in tears.*] But I say you shall; and I will have a husband, or I'll know the reason why—— You shall—you shall.

G. Phil. A pretty sort of a wife they intend for me, here———

Maria. I wonder you an't ashamed of yourself, to affront a young girl in this manner. I'll go and tell my pappa—I will—I will—I will.

[*Crying bitterly.*

G. Phil. And so you may—I have no more to say to you—And so, your servant, miss—your servant:

Maria. Ay! and by goles! my brother Bob shall fight you.

G. Phil. What care I for your brother Bob?

[*Going.*

Maria. How can you be so cruel, Mr Philpot? how can you—Oh! [*Cries and struggles with him. Exit* G. PHIL.] Ha, ha! I have carried my brother's scheme into execution charmingly, ha, ha! He will break off the match now, of his own accord; ha, ha! This is charming! this is fine! this is like a girl of spirit!

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—CORINNA'S *apartment.*

Enter CORINNA, TOM *following her.*

Cor. AN elderly gentleman, did you say?

Tom. Yes; that says he has got a letter for you, madam.

Cor. Desire the gentleman to walk up stairs. [*Exit* TOM.]—These old fellows will be coming after a body——but they pay well, and so—Servant, sir.

Enter OLD PHILPOT.

Old Phil. Fair lady, your very humble servant—Truly, a blooming young girl! Madam, I have a letter here for you from Bob Poacher, whom, I presume, you know.

Cor. Yes, sir, I know Bob Poacher——He is a very good friend of mine—[*Reads to herself.*]—he speaks so handsomely of you, sir, and says you are so much of the gentleman, that, to be sure, sir, I shall endeavour to be agreeable, sir.

Old Phil. Really you are very agreeable—— You see I am punctual to my hour.—[*Looks at his watch.*]

Cor. That is a mighty pretty watch, sir.

Old Phil. Yes, madam, it is a repeater; it has been in our family for a long time—this is a mighty pretty lodging—I have twenty guineas here, in a purse: here they are—[*Turns them out upon the table*]—as pretty golden rogues as ever fair fingers played with.

Cor. I am always agreeable to any thing from a gentleman.

Old Phil. There are—[*Aside.*]—some light guineas amongst them—I always put off my light guineas in this way. You are exceedingly welcome, madam. Your fair hand looks so tempting, I must kiss it—Oh! I could eat it up—Fair lady, your lips look so cherry—they actually in-

vite the touch.—[*Kisses.*]—Really, it makes the difference of cent. per cent. in one's constitution —You have really a mighty pretty foot—Oh, you little rogue!—I could smother you with kisses—Oh, you little delicate, charming———

[*Kisses her*

Enter PHILPOT.

G. Phil. Gee-houp! Awhi! Awhi! Gallows! Awhi!

Old Phil. Hey? What is all that! Somebody coming!

Cor. Some young rake, I fancy, coming in, whether my servants will or no.

Old Phil. What shall I do? I will not be seen for the world———Can't you hide me in that room?

Cor. Dear heart! no, sir; these wild young fellows take such liberties—he may take it into his head to go in there, and then you will be detected—get under the table—he shan't remain long, whoever he is—here—here, sir; get under here.

Old Phil. Ay, ay; that will do—don't let him stay long—Give me another buss—Wounds! I could——

Cor. Hush! make haste.

Old Phil. Ay, ay; I will, fair lady—[*Creeps under the table, and peeps out.*]—Don't let him stay long.

Cor. Hush! silence! you will ruin all else.

Enter G. PHILPOT, *dressed out.*

G. Phil. Sharper, do your work! Awhi! Awhi! So, my girl, how dost do?

Cor. Very well, thank you; I did not expect to see you so soon; I thought you was to be at the club. The servants told me you came back from the city at two o'clock to dress; and so I concluded you would have staid all night as usual.

G. Phil. No; the run was against me again, and I did not care to pursue ill fortune. But I am strong in cash, my girl.

Cor. Are you?

G. Phil. Yes, yes; suskins in plenty.

Old Phil. [*Peeping.*]—Ah, the ungracious! These are your haunts, are they?

G. Phil. Yes, yes; I am strong in cash; I have taken in old curmudgeon since I saw you.

Cor. As how, pray?

Old Phil. [*Peeping out.*]—Ay, as how; let us hear, pray.

G. Phil. Why, I'll tell you.

Old Phil. [*Peeping.*]—Ay, let us hear.

G. Phil. I talked a world of wisdom to him.

Old Phil. Ay!

G. Phil. Tipt him a few rascally sentiments of a scoundrelly kind of prudence.

Old Phil. Ay!

G. Phil. The old curmudgeon chuckled at it.

Old Phil. Ay, ay; the old curmudgeon! Ay, ay.

G. Phil. He is a sad old fellow.

Old Phil. Ay! go on.

G. Phil. And so I appeared to him as deserving of the gallows as he is himself.

Old Phil. Well said, boy, well said; go on.

G. Phil. And then he took a liking to me—Ay, ay, says he, ay, friendship has nothing to do with trade; George, thou art a son after my own heart; and then, as I dealt out little maxims of penury, he grinned like a Jew broker, when he has cheated his principal of an eight per cent. and cried, Ay, ay, that is the very spirit of trade ——a fool and his money are soon parted——[*Mimicking him.*]—And so on he went, like Harlequin in a French comedy, tickling himself into a good humour, till at last I tickled him out of fifteen hundred and odd pounds.

Old Phil. I have a mind to rise and break his bones——but then I discover myself——lie still, Isaac, lie still.

G. Phil. Oh, I understand trap; I talked of a great house stopping payment. The thing was true enough; but I had no dealings with them.

Old Phil. Ay, ay!

G. Phil. And so, for fear of breaking off a match with an idiot he wants me to marry, he lent me the money, and cheated me, though.

Old Phil. Ay, you have found it out, have ye?

G. Phil. No old usurer in England, grown hard-hearted in his trade, could have dealt worse with me. I must have commission upon these bills for taking them up for honour of the drawer —your bond——lawful interest while I am out of the money—and the difference for selling out of the stocks——an old, miserly, good-for-nothing skin-flint.

Old Phil. My blood boils to be at him—Go on; can't you tell us a little more?

G. Phil. Pho! he is an old curmudgeon—— And so I will talk no more about him——Come, give me a kiss.

Old Phil. The young dog, how he fastens his lips to her!

G. Phil. You shall go with me to Epsom next Sunday.

Cor. Shall I? that's charming.

G. Phil. You shall, in my chariot—I drive.

Cor. But I don't like to see you drive.

G. Phil. But I like it; I am as good a coachman as any in England: there was my lord what d'ye call him, he kept a stage-coach for his own driving; but, Lord! he was nothing to me.

Cor. No!

G. Phil. Oh, no! I know my road-work, my girl; when I have my coachman's hat on—Is my hat come home?

Cor. It hangs up yonder; but I don't like it.

G. Phil. Let me see—ay! the very thing—— Mind me when I go to work—throw my eye

about a few—handle the braces—take the off-leader by the jaw—here, you—how have you curbed this horse up? Let him out a link; do, you blood of a——whoo, eh! Jewel! Button! Whoo, eh! Come here, you, sir; how have you coupled Gallows! You know he'll take the bar of Sharper—take him in two holes, do—there's four pretty little knots as any in England—— Whoo, eh?

Cor. But can't you let your coachman drive?

G. Phil. No, no; see me mount the box, handle the reins, my wrist turned down, square my elbows, stamp with my foot—Gee-up! Off we go—Button, do you want to have us over? Do your work, do—Awhi! Awhi! There we bowl away! see how sharp they are—Gallows! Softly up hill—[*Whistles.*]—There's a public-house—Give them a mouthful of water, do—And fetch me a dram—drink it off—gee-up! Awhi! Awhi! There we go, scrambling all together—Reach Epsom in an hour and forty-three minutes, all Lombard-street to an egg-shell, we do—there's your work, my girl! eh! damn me!

Old Phil. Mercy on me! What a profligate, debauched, young dog it is!

Enter YOUNG WILDING.

Wild. Ha! my little Corinna——Sir, your servant.

G. Phil. Your servant, sir.

Wild. Sir, your servant.

G. Phil. Any commands for me, sir?

Wild. For you, sir?

G. Phil. Yes, for me, sir?

Wild. No, sir; I have no commands for you, sir.

G. Phil. What's your business?

Wild. Business!

G. Phil. Ay, business.

Wild. Why, very good business, I think; my little Corinna—my life—my little——

G. Phil. Is that your business? Pray, sir—not so free, sir.

Wild. Not so free!

G. Phil. No, sir! that lady belongs to me.

Wild. To you, sir?

G. Phil. Yes, to me.

Wild. To you! who are you?

G. Phil. As good a man as you.

Wild. Upon my word! who is this fellow, Corinna? some journeyman tailor, I suppose, who chooses to try on the gentleman's clothes before he carries them home.

G. Phil. Tailor! What do you mean by that? You lie! I am no tailor.

Wild. You shall give me satisfaction for that!

G. Phil. For what?

Wild. For giving me the lie.

G. Phil. I did not.

Wild. You did, sir.

G. Phil. You lie; I'll bet you five pounds I did not—but if you have a mind for a frolic—let me put by my sword—now, sir, come on.

[*In a boxing attitude.*

Wild. Why, you scoundrel, do you think I want to box? Draw, sir, this moment!

G. Phil. No I—come in.

Wild. Draw, or I'll cut you to pieces.

G. Phil. I'll give you satisfaction this way.

[*Pushes at him.*

Wild. Draw, sir, draw! You won't draw! There, take that, sirrah—and that—and that, you scoundrel.

Old Phil. Ay, ay; well done; lay it on.

[*Peeps out.*

Wild. And there, you rascal; and there.

Old Phil. Thank you, thank you; could not you find in your heart to lay on another for me?

Cor. Pray, don't be in such a passion, sir.

Wild My dear Corinna, don't be frightened; I shall not murder him.

Old Phil. I am safe here—lie still, Isaac, lie still—I am safe.

Wild. The fellow has put me out of breath.—[*Sits down.*]—[OLD PHILPOT'S *watch strikes ten under the table.*]—Whose watch is that?—[*Stares round.*]—Hey! What is all this?—[*Looks under the table.*]—Your humble servant, sir! turn out; pray turn out; you won't—then I'll unshell you. [*Takes away the table.*]—Your very humble servant, sir.

G. Phil. Zounds! My father there all this time! [*Aside.*

Wild. I suppose you will give me the lie, too?

Old Phil. [*Still on the ground.*]—No, sir, not I, truly; but the gentleman, there, may divert himself again, if he has a mind.

G. Phil. No, sir, not I; I pass.

Old Phil. George, you are there, I see?

G. Phil. Yes, sir; and you are there, I see.

Wild. Come, rise; who is this old fellow?

Cor. Upon my word, I don't know—as I live and breathe, I don't. He came after my maid, I suppose; I'll go and ask her—let me run out of the way, and hide myself from this scene of confusion! [*Exit* COR.

G. Phil. What an imp of hell she is! [*Aside.*

Wild. Come, get up, sir; you are too old to be beat.

Old Phil. [*Rising.*]—In troth so I am—but there you may exercise yourself again, if you please.

G. Phil. No more for me, sir—I thank you.

Old Phil. I have made but a bad voyage of it; the ship is sunk, and stock and block lost.

[*Aside.*

Wild. Ha, ha! Upon my soul, I can't help laughing at this old square toes; as for you, sir, you have had what you deserved; ha, ha! You are a kind of cull, I suppose; ha, ha! And you, reverend dad, you must come here tottering after a punk; ha, ha!

Old Phil. Oh! George! George!

G. Phil. Oh! Father! Father!

Wild. Ha, ha! What, father and son! And so you have found one another out, ha, ha! Well, you may have business; and so, gentlemen, I'll leave you to yourselves.

[*Exit* WILD.

G. Phil. This is too much to bear—What an infamous jade she is! all her contrivance! don't be angry with me, sir; I'll go my ways this moment, tie myself up in the matrimonial noose, and never have any thing to do with these courses again. [*Going.*

Old Phil. And, hark'e, George, tie me up in a real noose, and turn me off as soon as you will.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE I.—*A room in* SIR JASPER WILDING'S *house.*

Enter BEAUFORT, *dressed as a lawyer, and* SIR JASPER WILDING *with a bottle and glass in his hand.*

Beau. No more, sir Jasper; I can't drink any more.

Sir Jas. Why, you be but a weezen-faced drinker, master Quagmire; come, man, finish this bottle.

Beau. I beg to be excused; you had better let me read over the deeds to you.

Sir Jas. Zounds! 'tis all about out-houses, and messuages, and barns, and stables, and orchards, and meadows, and lands, and tenements, and woods, and under-woods, and commons, and backsides. I am o' the commission for Wilts, and I know the ley; and so truce with your jargon, Mr Quagmire.

Beau. But, sir, you don't consider, marriage is an affair of importance; it is contracted between persons, first, consenting; secondly, free from canonical impediments; thirdly, free from civil impediments, and can only be dissolved for canonical causes, or levitical causes.—See Leviticus xviii. and xxviii. Harry VIII. chap. vii.

Sir Jas. You shall drink t'other bumper, an you talk of ley.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Old Mr Philpot, sir, and his son.

Sir Jas. Wounds! that's right; they'll take me out of the hands of this lawyer here. [*Exit.*

Beau. Well done, Beaufort! thus far you have played your part, as if you had been of the pimplenose family of Furnival's-inn.

Re-enter SIR JASPER, *with* OLD PHILPOT *and* G. PHILPOT.

Sir Jas. Master Philpot, I be glad you are come: this man here has so plagued me with his ley! but now we'll have no more about it, but sign the papers at once.

Old Phil. Sir Jasper, twenty thousand pounds, you know, is a great deal of money——I should not give you so much, if it was not for the sake of your daughter's marrying my son; so that, if you will allow me discount for prompt payment, I will pay the money down.

G. Phil. Sir, I must beg to see the young lady once more before I embark; for to be plain, sir, she appears to be a mere natural.

Sir Jas. I'll tell you what, youngster, I find my girl is a notable wench—and here, here's zon Bob.

Enter YOUNG WILDING.

Sir Jas. Bob, gee us your hand——I have finished the business—and zo now—here, here, here's your vather-in-law.

Old Phil. Of all the birds in the air, is that he? [*Aside.*

G. Phil. He has behaved like a relation to me already. [*Aside.*

Sir Jas. Go to un, man——that's your vather——

Wild. This is the strangest accident—Sir—Sir—[*Stifling a laugh.*] I—I—Sir—upon my soul, I cant' stand this. [*Bursts out a laughing.*

Old Phil. I deserve it! I deserve to be laughed at. [*Aside.*

G. Phil. He has shown his regard to his sister's family already. [*Aside.*

Sir Jas. What's the matter, Bob? I tell you this is your vather-in-law—[*Pulls* OLD PHILPOT *to him.*] Master Philpot, that's Bob—Speak to un, Bob——speak to un——

Wild. Sir—I—I am [*Stifles a laugh.*] I say, sir—I am, sir—extremely proud—of—of——

G. Phil. Of having beat me, I suppose? [*Aside.*

Wild. Of the honour, sir—of—of—— [*Laugh.*

G. Phil. Ay; that's what he means. [*Aside.*

Wild. And, sir—I—I—this opportunity—I cannot look him in the face——[*Bursts out into a laugh.*] ha, ha! I cannot stay in the room—— [*Going.*

Sir Jas. Why, the volks are all mad, I believe! you shall stay, Bob; you shall stay. [*Holds him.*

Wild. Sir, I—I cannot possibly—— [*Whispers his father.*

Old Phil. George! George! what a woeful figure do we make?

G. Phil. Bad enough, of all conscience, sir.

Sir Jasp. An odd adventure, Bob! [*Laughs heartily.*

G. Phil. Ay! there now he is hearing the whole affair, and is laughing at me.

Sir Jas. Ha, ha! Poh, never mind it—a did not hurt un.

Old Phil. It's all discovered.

Sir Jas. Ha, ha!—I told ye zon Bob could find a hare squat upon her form with any he in Christendom—ha, ha! never mind it, man; Bob meant no harm—Here, here, Bob—here's your vather, and there's your brother—I should like to have zeen un under the table!

Wild. Gentlemen, your most obedient.

[*Stifling a laugh.*

Old Phil. Sir, your servant——He has licked George well——and I forgive him.

Sir Jas. Well, young gentleman, which way is your mind now?

G. Phil. Why, sir, to be plain, I find your daughter an idiot.

Sir Jas. Zee her again, then——zee her again ——Here, you, sirrah, send our Moll hither.

Ser. Yes, sir.

Sir Jas. Very well, then; we'll go into t'other room, crack a bottle, and settle matters there; and leave un together——Hoic! hoic!——Our Moll——Tally over.

Enter MARIA.

Maria. Did you call me, papa?

Sir Jas. I did, my girl—There, the gentleman wants to speak with you—Behave like a clever wench, as you are——Come along, my boys——Master Quagmire, come and finish the business.

[*Exit singing, with* OLD PHILPOT *and* BEAUFORT. *Manent* GEORGE *and* MARIA.

G. Phil. I know she is a fool, and so I will speak to her without ceremony—Well, Miss, you told me you could read and write!

Maria. Read, sir? Heavens!—[*Looking at him.*] Ha, ha, ha!

G. Phil. What does she laugh at?

Maria. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

G. Phil. What diverts you so, pray?

Maria. Ha, ha, ha! What a fine taudry figure you have made of yourself! Ha, ha!

G. Phil. Figure, madam!

Maria. I shall die, I shall die! ha, ha, ha!

G. Phil. Do you make a laughing-stock of me?

Maria. No, sir; by no means——Ha, ha, ha!

G. Phil. Let me tell you, miss, I don't understand being treated thus.

Maria. Sir, I can't possibly help it—I—I—Ha, ha!

G. Phil. I shall quit the room, and tell your papa, if you go on thus.

Maria. Sir, I beg your pardon a thousand zimes—I am but a giddy girl—I can't help it—I—I—Ha, ha!

G. Phil. Madam, this is downright insult!

Maria. Sir, you look somehow or other——I don't know how, so comically——Ha, ha, ha!

G. Phil. Did you never see a gentleman dressed before?

Maria. Never like you—I beg your pardon, sir—Ha, ha, ha!

G. Phil. Now, here is an idiot in spirits—I tell you, this is your ignorance——I am dressed in high taste.

Maria. Yes; so you are——Ha, ha, ha!

G. Phil. Will you have done laughing?

Maria. Yes, sir, I will——I will——there—there——there——I have done.

G. Phil. Do so then, and behave yourself a little sedately.

Maria. I will, sir;—I won't look at him, and then I sha'nt laugh—— [*Aside.*

G. Phil. Let me tell you, miss, that nobody understands dress better than I do.

Maria. Ha, ha, ha!

G. Phil. She's mad, sure!

Maria. No, sir, I am not mad—I have done, sir—I have done—I assure you, sir, that nobody is more averse from ill manners, and would take greater pains not to affront a gentleman——Ha, ha, ha!

G. Phil. Again? Zounds! what do you mean? you'll put me in a passion, I can tell you, presently.

Maria. I can't help it—indeed I can't—Beat me if you will, but let me laugh—I can't help it, Ha, ha, ha!

G. Phil. I never met with such usage in my life.

Maria. I shall die!—Do, sir, let me laugh—It will do me good—Ha, ha, ha!

[*Sits down in a fit of laughing.*

G. Phil. If this is your way, I won't stay a moment longer in the room—I'll go this moment and tell your father.

Maria. Sir, sir, Mr Philpot, don't be so hasty, sir—I have done, sir; it's over now—I have had my laugh out—I am a giddy girl—but I'll be grave.——I'll compose myself, and act a different scene with him from what I did in the morning. I have all the materials of an impertinent wit, and I will now twirl him about the room, like a boy setting up his top with his finger and thumb. [*Aside.*

G. Phil. Miss, I think you told me you could read and write?

Maria. Read, sir! Reading is the delight of my life——Do you love reading, sir?

G. Phil. Prodigiously—How pert she is grown! ——I have read very little, and I'm resolved, for the future, to read less. [*Aside.*] What have you read, Miss?

Maria. Every thing.

G. Phil. You have?

Maria. Yes, sir, I have.

G. Phil. Oh! brave!—and do you remember what you read, Miss?

Maria. Not so well as I could wish—Wits have short memories.

G. Phil. Oh! you are a wit too?

Maria. I am—and do you know that I feel myself provoked to a simile now?

G. Phil. Provoked to a simile! Let us hear it.

Maria. What do you think we are both like?

G. Phil. Well———

Maria. Like Cymon and Iphigenia, in Dryden's fable.

G. Phil. Jenny in Dryden's fable!

Maria. *The fanning breeze upon her bosom blows;*
To meet the fanning breeze, her bosom rose.

That's me——now you.

He trudged along, unknowing what he sought,
And whistled as he went [mimicks] *for want of thought.*

G. Phil. This is not the same girl! [*Disconcerted.*

Maria. Mark again, mark again:

The fool of nature stood with stupid eyes,
And gaping mouth, that testified surprise.
[*He looks foolish, she laughs at him.*

G. Phil. I must take care how I speak to her; she is not the fool I took her for. [*Aside.*

Maria. You seem surprised, sir; but this is my way—I read, sir, and then I apply—I have read every thing: Suckling, Waller, Milton, Dryden, Lansdowne, Gay, Prior, Swift, Addison, Pope, Young, Thomson.

G. Phil. Hey! the devil—what a clack is here! [*He walks across the stage.*

Maria. [*Following him eagerly.*] Shakespeare, Fletcher, Otway, Southerne, Rowe, Congreve, Wicherly, Farquhar, Cibber, Vanbrugh, Steel, in short every body; and I find them all wit, fire, vivacity, spirit, genius, taste, imagination, raillery, humour, character, and sentiment. Well done, Miss Notable! you have played your part like a young actress in high favour with the town. [*Aside.*

G. Phil. Her tongue goes like a water-mill! [*Aside.*

Maria. What do you say to me now, sir?

G. Phil. Say! I don't know what the devil to say. [*Aside.*

Maria. What's the matter, sir? Why, you look as if the stocks were fallen—or like London bridge at low water, or like a waterman when the Thames is frozen; or like a politician without news; or like a prude without scandal; or like a great lawyer without a brief; or like some lawyers with one—or——

G. Phil. Or like a poor devil of a husband henpecked by a wit, and so say no more of that. What a capricious piece here is! [*Aside.*

Maria. Oh, fie! you have spoiled all; I had not half done.

G. Phil. There is enough of all conscience. You may content yourself.

Maria. But I can't be so easily contented—I like a simile half a mile long.

G. Phil. I see you do.

Maria. Oh! And I make verses too——verses like an angel—off hand—extempore. Can you give me an extempore?

G. Phil. What does she mean? No, Miss—I have never a one about me.

Maria. You can't give me an extempore—Oh! for shame, Mr Philpot! I love an extempore of all things; and I love the poets dearly; their sense so fine, their invention rich as Pactolus.

G. Phil. A poet rich as Pactolus! I have heard of that Pactolus in the city.

Maria. Very like.

G. Phil. But you never heard of a poet as rich as he.

Maria. As who?

G. Phil. Pactolus—He was a great Jew merchant—lived in the ward of Farringdown-without.

Maria. Pactolus a Jew merchant! Pactolus is a river.

G. Phil. A river!

Maria. Yes——don't you understand geography?

G. Phil. The girl's crazy!

Maria. Oh! sir, if you don't understand geography, you are nobody. I understand geography, and I understand orthography; you know I told you I can write—and I can dance too—will you dance a minuet? [*Sings and dances.*

G. Phil. You shan't lead me a dance, I promise you.

Maria. Oh! very well, sir—you refuse me—remember you'll hear immediately of my being married to another, and then you'll be ready to hang yourself.

G. Phil. Not I, I promise you.

Maria. Oh! very well, very well———remember———mark my words. I'll do it, you shall see—Ha, ha! [*Runs off in a fit of laughing.*

G. Phil. Marry you! I would as soon carry my wife to live in Bow-street, and write over the door 'Philpot's punch-house.'

Enter OLD PHILPOT *and* SIR JASPER.

Sir Jas. [*Singing.*] So rarely, so bravely we'll hunt him over the downs, and we'll hoop and we'll halloo! Gee us your hand, young gentleman; well, what zay ye to un now? Ben't she a clever girl?

G. Phil. A very extraordinary girl indeed!

Sir Jas. Did not I tell un zo—then you have nothing to do but to consummate as soon as you will.

G. Phil. No; you may keep her, sir—I thank you. I'll have nothing to do with her.

Old Phil. What's the matter now, George?

G Phil. Pho! she's a wit.

Sir Jas. Ay, I told un zo.

G. Phil. And that's worse than t'other. I am off, sir.

Sir Jas. Odds heart! I am afraid you are no great wit.

Enter MARIA.

Maria. Well, papa, the gentleman won't have me.

Old Phil. The numskull wont do as his father bids him; and so, sir Jasper, with your consent, I'll make a proposal to the young lady myself.

Maria. How! what does he say?

Old Phil. I am in the prime of my days, and I can be a brisk lover still! Fair lady, a glance of your eye is like the returning sun in the spring —it melts away the frost of age, and gives a new warmth and vigour to all nature.

[*Falls a coughing.*

Maria. Dear heart! I should like to have a scene with him.

Sir Jas. Hey! what's in the wind now? This won't take—My girl shall have fair play. No old fellow shall totter to her bed! What say you, my girl, will you rock his cradle?

Maria. Sir, I have one small doubt—Pray, can I have two husbands at a time?

G. Phil. There's a question now! She is grown foolish again.

Old Phil. Fair lady, the law of the land——

Sir Jas. Hold ye, hold ye! let me talk of law; I know the law better nor any on ye—Two husbands at once—No, no! Men are scarce, and that's downright poaching.

Maria. I am sorry for it, sir. For then I can't marry him, I see.

Sir Jas. Why not?

Maria. I am contracted to another.

Sir Jas. Contracted! to whom?

Maria. To Mr Beaufort—that gentleman, sir.

Old Phil. That gentleman?

Beau. Yes, sir. [*Throws open his gown.*] My name is Beaufort. And, I hope, sir Jasper, when you consider my fortune, and my real affection for your daughter, you will generously forgive the stratagem I have made use of.

Sir Jas. Master Quagmire! What, are you young Beaufort all this time?

Old Phil. That won't do, sir; that won't take.

Beau. But it must take, sir! You have signed the deeds for your daughter's marriage; and sir Jasper by this instrument has made me his son-in-law.

Old Phil. How is this, how is this! Then, sir Jasper, you will agree to cancel the deeds, I suppose? for you know——

Sir Jas. Catch me at that, an ye can! I fulfilled my promise, and your son refused, and so the wench has looked out slyly for herself elsewhere. Did I not tell you she was a clever girl? I ben't ashamed o' my girl—Our Moll, you have done no harm, and Mr Beaufort is welcome to you with all my heart. I'll stand to what I have signed, though you have taken me by surprise.

Wild. Bravo! my scheme has succeeded rarely!

Old Phil. And so here I am bubbled and choused out of my money—George, George, what a day's work have we made of it! Well, if it must be so, be it so. I desire, young gentleman, you will come and take my daughter away tomorrow morning. And, I'll you what—here, here —take my family-watch into the bargain; and I wish it may play you just such another trick as it has me; that's all—I'll never go intriguing with a family-watch again.

Maria. Well, sir! [*To* G. PHIL.] What do you think of me now? An't I a connoisseur, sir? and a virtuoso? Ha, ha!

G. Phil. Yes! and much good may't do your husband! I have been connoisseured among ye to some purpose—Bubbled at play; duped by my wench; cudgelled by a rake; laughed at by a girl; detected by my father—and there is the sum total of all I have got at this end of the town.

Old Phil. This end of the town! I desire never to see it again while I live—I'll pop into a hackney-coach this moment, drive to Mincing-lane, and never venture back to this side of Temple-bar. [*Going.*

G. Phil. And, sir, sir! Shall I drive you?

Old Phil. Ay; you or any body. [*Exit.*

G. Phil. I'll overturn the old hocus at the first corner. [*Following him.*

Sir Jas. They shan't go zo, neither—they shall stay and crack a bottle.

[*Exit after them.*

Maria. Well, brother, how have I played my part?

Wild. } To a miracle!
Beau. }

Maria. Have I? I don't know how that is—

Love urged me on to try all wily arts
To win your—[*To* BEAU.] *No! not yours—*
To win your hearts; [To the Audience.
Your hearts to win is now my aim alone;
There if I grow, the harvest is your own.

[Exeunt omnes.

THE

LIAR.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
OLD WILDING, *a country gentleman.*	MISS GRANTHAM, *attached to* SIR JAMES ELLIOT.
YOUNG WILDING, *the Liar, his son.*	MISS GODFREY, *her friend.*
PAPILLION, *valet to* YOUNG WILDING.	KITTY, *maid to* MISS GRANTHAM.
SIR JAMES ELLIOT, *attached to* MISS GRANTHAM.	
Servants, Watermen, &c.	

Scene—London.

ACT. I.

SCENE I.—*Young Wilding's Lodgings.*

YOUNG WILDING *and* PAPILLION *discovered.*

Young Wild. AND am I now, Papillion, perfectly equipped?

Pap. *Personne mieux.* Nobody better.

Young Wild. My figure?

Pap. *Fait a peindre.*

Young Wild. My air?

Pap. *Libre.*

Young Wild. My address?

Pap. *Parisiene.*

Young Wild. My hat sits easily under my arm; not like the draggled tail of my tattered academical habit?

Pap. *Ah, bien autre chose.*

Young Wild. Why, then, adieu Alma Mater, and *bien venue la ville de Londre;* farewell to the schools, and welcome the theatres; presidents, proctors, short commons with long graces, must now give place to plays, bagnios, long tavern-bills, with no graces at all.

Pap. Ah, bravo, bravo!

Young Wild. Well, but my dear Papillion, you must give me the cart du paye. This town is a newworld to me; my provident papa, you know, would never suffer me near the smoke of London; and what can be his motive for permitting me now, I can't readily conceive.

Pap. *Ni moi.*

Young Wild. I shall, however, take the liberty to conceal my arrival from him for a few days.

Pap. *Vous avez raison.*

Young Wild. Well, my Mentor, and how am I to manage? Direct my road: where must I begin? But the debate is, I suppose, of consequence?

Pap. *Vraiment.*

Young Wild. How long have you left Paris, Papillion?

Pap. Twelve, dirteen year.

Young Wild. I can't compliment you upon your progress in English.

Pap. The accent is difficult.

Young Wild. But here you are at home.

Pap. *C'est vrai.*

Young Wild. No stranger to fashionable places?

Pap. *O faite!*

Young Wild. Acquainted with the fashionable figures of both sexes?

Pap. *Sans doute.*

Young Wild. Well, then, open your lecture: And, d'ye hear, Papillion, as you have the honour to be promoted from the mortifying condition of an humble valet to the important charge of a private tutor, let us discard all distance between us. See me ready to slake my thirst at your fountain of knowledge, my Magnus Apollo.

Pap. Here, then, I disclose my Helicon to my poetical pupil.

Young Wild. Hey, Papillion?

Pap. Sir!

Young Wild. What is this? why, you speak English!

Pap. Without doubt.

Young Wild. But like a native!

Pap. To be sure.

Young Wild. And what am I to conclude from all this?

Pap. Logically thus, sir: Whoever speaks pure English is an Englishman. I speak pure English; ergo, I am an Englishman. There's a categorical syllogism for you, major, minor, and consequence. What! do you think, sir, that whilst you was busy at Oxford, I was idle? No, no, no!

Young Wild. Well, sir, but notwithstanding your pleasantry, I must have this matter explained.

Pap. So you shall, my good sir; but don't be in such a hurry. You cannot suppose I would give you the key, unless I meant you should open the door.

Young Wild. Why, then, prithee, unlock it.

Pap. Immediately. But, by way of entering upon my post as preceptor, suffer me first to give you a hint. You must not expect, sir, to find here, as at Oxford, men appearing in their real characters: every body there, sir, knows that Dr Mussy is a fellow of Magdalen, and Tom Trifle a student of Christ-church; but this town is one great comedy, in which not only the principles, but frequently the persons, are feigned.

Young Wild. A useful observation.

Pap. Why now, sir, at the first coffee-house I shall enter you, you will perhaps meet a man, from whose decent sable dress, placid countenance, insinuating behaviour, short sword, with the waiter's civil addition of a dish of coffee for Dr Julap, you would suppose him to be a physician.

Young Wild. Well?

Pap. Does not know diascordium from diaculum. An absolute French spy, concealed under the shelter of a huge medicinal perriwig.

Young Wild. Indeed!

Pap. A martial figure, too, it is odds but you will encounter; from whose scars, title, dress, and address, you would suppose to have had a share in every action since the peace of the Pyrenees; runner to a gaming table, and bully to a bawdy-house. Battles, to be sure, he has been in—with the watch; and frequently a prisoner, too—in the round-house.

Young Wild. Amazing!

Pap. In short, sir, you will meet with lawyers, who practise smuggling, and merchants who trade upon Hounslow-heath; reverend atheists, right honourable sharpers, and Frenchmen from the county of York.

Young Wild. In the last list, I presume, you roll?

Pap. Just my situation.

Young Wild. And pray, sir, what may be your motive for this whimsical transformation?

Pap. A very harmless one, I promise you. I would only avail myself at the expence of folly and prejudice.

Young Wild. As how?

Pap. Why, sir————But to be better understood, I believe it will be necessary to give you a short sketch of the principal incidents of my life.

Young Wild. Prithee, do.

Pap. Why, then, you are to know, sir, that my former situation has been rather above my present condition; having once sustained the dignity of sub-preceptor to one of those cheap rural academies with which our county of York is so plentifully stocked.

Young Wild. But to the point: Why this disguise? why renounce your country?

Pap. There, sir, you make a little mistake: it was my country that renounced me.

Young Wild. Explain.

Pap. In an instant: upon quitting the school, and first coming to town, I got recommended to the compiler of the Monthly Review.

Young Wild. What, an author, too?

Pap. Oh, a voluminous one! The whole region of the belles lettres fell under my inspection; physic, divinity, and the mathematics, my mistress managed herself. There, sir, like another Aristarch, I dealt out fame and damnation at pleasure. In obedience to the caprice and commands of my master, I have condemned books I never read; and applauded the fidelity of a translation, without understanding one syllable of the original.

Young Wild. Ah! why, I thought the acuteness of discernment, and depth of knowledge, were necessary to accomplish a critic.

Pap. Yes, sir; but not a monthly one. Our method was very concise. We copy the title-page of a new book; we never go any further. If we are ordered to praise it, we have at hand about ten words, which, scattered through as many periods, effectually does the business; as, laudable design, happy arrangement, spirited language, nervous sentiment, elevation of thought, conclusive argument. If we are to decry, then we have, unconnected, flat, false, illiberal, strictures, reprehensible, unnatural: And thus, sir, peppers the author, and soon rid our hands of his work.

Young Wild. A short recipe!

Pap. And yet, sir, you have all the materials that are necessary. These are the arms with which we engage authors of every kind. To us, all subjects are equal; plays or sermons, poetry or politics, music or midwifery, it is the same thing.

Young Wild. How came you to resign this easy employment?

Pap. It would not answer. Notwithstanding what we say, people will judge for themselves; our work hung upon hand, and all I could get from the publisher was four shillings a-week and my small-beer. Poor pittance!

Young Wild. Poor, indeed.

Pap. Oh, half-starved me.

Young Wild. What was your next change?

Pap. I was mightily puzzled to choose. Some would have me turn player, and others methodist preacher; but as I had no money to build me a tabernacle, I did not think it could answer; and as to player———whatever might happen to me, I was determined not to bring a disgrace upon my family; and so I resolved to turn footman.

Young Wild. Wisely resolved.

Pap. Yes, sir, but not so easily executed.

Young Wild. No!

Pap. Oh no, sir! Many a weary step have I taken after a place. Here I was too old, there I was too young; here the last livery was too big, there it was too little; here I was awkward, there I was knowing: Madam disliked me at this house, her ladyship's woman at the next: so that I was as much puzzled to find out a place, as the great Cynic philosopher to discover a man. In short, I was quite in a state of despair, when chance threw an old friend in my way that quite retrieved my affairs.

Young Wild. Pray, who might he be?

Pap. A little bit of a Swiss genius, who had been French usher with me at the same school in the country. I opened my melancholy story to him over three penny-worth of beef-a-la-mode, in a cellar in St Ann's. My little foreign friend pursed up his lanthorn jaws, and with a shrug of contempt, 'Ah, maitre Jean, vous n'a-'vez pas la politique; you have no finesse: to 'thrive here, you must study the folly of your 'own country.' 'How, monsieur?' 'Taisez vous: 'keep a your tongue. Autrefois I teach you 'speak French, now I teach-a you to forget Eng-'lish. Go vid me to my lodgement; I vil give 'you proper dress, den go present yourself to de 'same hotels, de very same house; you will find 'all de dors dat was shut in your face as footman 'Anglois, will fly open demselves to a French va-'let de chambre.'

Young Wild. Well, Papillion?

Pap. Gad, sir, I thought it was but an honest artifice, so I determined to follow my friend's advice.

Young Wild. Did it succeed?

Pap. Better than expectation. My tawny face, long queue, and broken English, was a passe-partout. Besides, when I am out of place, this disguise procures me many resources.

Young Wild. As how?

Pap. Why, at a pinch, sir, I am either a teacher of tongues, a friseur, a dentist, or a dancing-master: these, sir, are hereditary professions to Frenchmen. But now, sir, to the point: As you were pleased to be so candid with me, I was determined to have no reserve with you.—You have studied books, I have studied men; you want advice, and I have some at your service.

Young Wild. Well, I'll be your customer.

Pap. But guard my secret. If I should be so unfortunate as to lose your place, don't shut me out from every other.

Young Wild. You may rely upon me.

Pap. In a few years I shall be in a condition to retire from business; but whether I shall settle at my family-seat, or pass over to the continent, is as yet undetermined. Perhaps, in gratitude to the country, I may purchase a marquisate near Paris, and spend the money I have got by their means generously amongst them.

Young Wild. A grateful intention! But let us sally. Where do we open?

Pap. Let us see—one o'clock—it is a fine day. The Mall will be crowded.

Young Wild. Allons!

Pap. But don't stare, sir; survey every thing with an air of habit and indifference.

Young Wild. Never fear.

Pap. But I would, sir, crave a moment's audience, upon a subject that may prove very material to you.

Young Wild. Proceed.

Pap. You will pardon my presumption; but you have, my good master, one little foible, that I could wish you to correct.

Young Wild. What is it?

Pap. And yet it is a pity, too, you do it so very well.

Young Wild. Prithee be plain.

Pap. You have, sir, a lively imagination, with a most happy turn for invention.

Young Wild. Well.

Pap. But now and then, in your narratives, you are hurried, by a flow of spirits, to border upon the improbable—a little given to the marvellous.

Young Wild. I understand you: what, I am somewhat subject to lying?

Pap. O, pardon me, sir; I don't say that; no, no! only a little apt to embellish; that's all.—To be sure it is a fine gift, that there is no disputing: but men in general are so stupid, so rigorously attached to matter of fact———And yet this talent of yours is the very soul and spirit of poetry; and why it should not be the same in prose, I can't, for my life, determine.

Young Wild. You would advise me, then, not to be quite so poetical in my prose?

Pap. Why, sir, if you would descend a little to the grovelling comprehensions of the million, I think it would be as well.

Young Wild. I'll think of it.

Pap. Besides, sir, in this town, people are more smoky and suspicious. Oxford, you know, is the seat of the Muses; and a man is naturally permitted more ornament and garniture to his conversation, than they will allow in this latitude.

Young Wild. I believe you are right. But we shall be late. D'ye hear me, Papillion; if at any time you find me too poetical, give me a hint; your advice shan't be thrown away.

[*Exit.*

Pap. I wish it mayn't; but the disease is too rooted to be quickly removed. Lord, how I have sweat for him! yet he is as unembarrassed, easy, and fluent, all the time, as if he really believed what he said. Well, to be sure, he is a great master; it is a thousand pities his genius could not be converted to some public service. I think the government should employ him to answer the Brussels Gazette. I'll be hanged if he is not too many for Monsieur Maubert, at his own weapons.

SCENE II.—*The Park.*

Enter MISS GRANTHAM, MISS GODFREY, *and Servant.*

Miss Gran. John, let the chariot go round to Spring-gardens; for your mistress and I shall call at Lady Bab's, Miss Arabella Allnight's, the Countess of Crumple's, and the tall man's, this morning. My dear Miss Godfrey, what trouble I have had to get you out! Why, child, you are as tedious as a long morning. Do you know now, that of all places of public rendezvous, I honour the Park? forty thousand million of times preferable to the play-house! Don't you think so, my dear?

Miss God. They are both well in their way.

Miss Gran. Way! why, the purpose of both is the same; to meet company, i'n't it? What, d'ye think I go there for the plays, or come here for the trees? ha, ha! well, that is well enough. But, O Gemini! I beg a million of pardons! You are a prude, and have no relish for the little innocent liberties with which a fine woman may indulge herself in public.

Miss God. Liberties in public!

Miss Gran. Yes, child; such as encoring a song at an opera, interrupting a play in a critical scene of distress, hallooing to a pretty fellow cross the Mall, as loud as if you were calling a coach. Why, do you know now, my dear, that, by a lucky stroke in dress, and a few high airs of my own making, I have had the good fortune to be gazed at and followed by as great a crowd, on a Sunday, as if I was the Tripoli ambassador?

Miss God. The good fortune, madam! Surely the wish of every decent woman is to be unnoticed in public.

Miss Gran. Decent! oh, my dear queer creature, what a phrase have you found out for a woman of fashion! Decency is, child, a mere bourgeois, plebeian quality, and fit only for those who pay court to the world, and not for us, to whom the world pays court. Upon my word, you must enlarge your ideas: You are a fine girl, and we must not have you lost; I'll undertake you myself. But, as I was saying—Pray, my dear, what was I saying?

Miss God. I profess I don't recollect.

Miss Gran. Hey!—Oh, ah! the Park! One great reason for my loving the Park is, that one has so many opportunities of creating connections.

Miss God. Madam!

Miss Gran. Nay, don't look grave. Why, do you know that all my male friendships are formed in this place?

Miss God. It is an odd spot: But you must pardon me, if I doubt the possibility.

Miss Gran. Oh, I will convince you in a moment; for here seems to be coming a good smart figure that I don't recollect. I will throw out a lure.

Miss God. Nay, for Heaven's sake!

Miss Gran. I am determined, child: that is—

Miss God. You will excuse my withdrawing.

Miss Gran. Oh, please yourself, my dear.

[*Exit* MISS GODFREY.

Enter YOUNG WILDING, *with* PAPILLION.

Young Wild. Your ladyship's handkerchief, madam.

Miss Gran. I am, sir, concerned at the trouble---

Young Wild. A most happy incident for me, madam! as chance has given me an honour, in one lucky minute, that the most diligent attention has not been able to procure for me in the whole tedious round of a revolving year.

Miss Gran. Is this meant to me, sir?

Young Wild. To whom else, madam? Surely, you must have marked my respectful assiduity, my uninterrupted attendance; to plays, operas, balls, routs, and ridottos, I have pursued you like your shadow; I have besieged your door for a glimpse of your exit and entrance, like a distressed creditor, who has no arms against privilege but perseverance.

Pap. So, now he is in for it; stop him who can.

Young Wild. In short, madam, ever since I quitted America, which I take now to be about a year, I have as faithfully guarded the live-long night your ladyship's portal, as a centinel the powder magazine in a fortified city.

Pap. Quitted America! well pulled.

Miss Gran. You have served in America, then?

Young Wild. Full four years, Madam: and during that whole time, not a single action of consequence, but I had an opportunity to signalize myself; and I think I may, without vanity, affirm, I did not miss the occasion. You have heard of Quebec, I presume?

Pap. What the deuce is he driving at now?

Young Wild. The project to surprise that place was thought a happy expedient, and the first mounting the breach, a gallant exploit. There, indeed, the whole army did me justice.

Miss Gran. I have heard the honour of that conquest attributed to another name.

Young Wild. The mere taking the town, madam. But that's a trifle: Sieges now-a-days are reduced to certainties; it is amazing how minutely exact we, who know the business, are at calculation. For instance now, we will suppose the commander in chief, addressing himself to me, was to say, 'Colonel, I want to reduce that 'fortress; what will be the expence?'—'Why, 'please your highness, the reduction of that for-'tress will cost you one thousand and two lives, 'sixty-nine legs, ditto arms, fourscore fractures, 'with about twenty dozen of flesh wounds.'

Miss Gran. And you should be near the mark?

Young Wild. To an odd joint, madam. But, madam, it is not to the French alone that my feats are confined: Cherokees, Catabaws, with all the Aws and Ees of the continent, have felt the force of my arms.

Pap. This is too much, sir!

Young Wild. Hands off!—Nor am I less adroit at a treaty, madam, than terrible in battle. To me we owe the friendship of the Five Nations; and I had the first honour of smoking the pipe of peace with the Little Carpenter.

Miss Gran. And so young!

Young Wild. This gentleman, though a Frenchman, and an enemy, I had the fortune to deliver from the Mohawks, whose prisoner he had been for nine years. He gives a most entertaining account of their laws and customs: he shall present you with the wampum belt and a scalping-knife. Will you permit him, madam, just to give you a taste of the military-dance, with a short specimen of their war-whoop?

Pap. For Heaven's sake!

Miss Gran. The place is too public.

Young Wild. In short, madam, after having gathered as many laurels abroad as would garnish a Gothic cathedral at Christmas, I returned to reap the harvest of the well-fought field. Here it was my good fortune to encounter you; then was the victor vanquished; what the enemy could never accomplish, your eyes in an instant atchieved; prouder to serve here than command in chief elsewhere; and more glorious in wearing your chains, than in triumphing over the vanquished world.

Miss Gran. I have got here a most heroical lover: But I see sir James Elliot coming, and must dismiss him.—[*Aside.*]——Well, sir, I accept the tendre of your passion, and may find a time to renew our acquaintance; at present it is necessary we should separate.

Young Wild. 'Slave to your will, I live but to obey you.' But may I be indulged with the knowledge of your residence?

Miss Gran. Sir?

Young Wild. Your place of abode.

Miss Gran. Oh, sir, you can't want to be acquainted with that; you have a whole year stood centinel at my ladyship's portal!

Young Wild. Madam, I—I—I——

Miss Gran. Oh, sir, your servant. Ha, ha, ha! What, you are caught? ha, ha, ha! Well, he has a most intrepid assurance. Adieu, my Mars. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit* MISS GRAN.

Pap. That last was an unlucky question, sir.

Young Wild. A little mal-a-propos, I must confess.

Pap. A man should have a good memory who deals much in this poetical prose.

Young Wild. Poh! I'll soon re-establish my credit. But I must know who this girl is. Hark ye, Papillion, could not you contrive to pump out of her footman—I see there he stands—the name of his mistress?

Pap. I will try. [*Exit.*

[WILDING *retires to the back of the stage.*

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT, *and Servant.*

Sir James. Music and an entertainment?

Ser. Yes, sir.

Sir James. Last night, upon the water?

Ser. Upon the water, last night.

Sir James. Who gave it?

Ser. That, sir, I can't say.

To them WILDING.

Young Wild. Sir James Elliot, your most devoted.

Sir James. Ah, my dear Wilding! you are welcome to town.

Young Wild. You will pardon my impatience; I interrupted you; you seemed upon an interesting subject?

Sir James. Oh, an affair of gallantry.

Young Wild. Of what kind?

Sir James. A young lady regaled last night by her lover on the Thames.

Young Wild. As how?

Sir James. A band of music in boats.

Young Wild. Were they good performers?

Sir James. The best. Then conducted to Marblehall, where she found a magnificent collation.

Young Wild. Well ordered?

Sir James. With elegance. After supper a ball; and, to conclude the night, a firework.

Young Wild. Was the last well designed?

Sir James. Superb.

Young Wild. And happily executed?

Sir James. Not a single faux pas.

Young Wild. And you don't know who gave it?

Sir James. I can't even guess.

Young Wild. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir James. Why do you laugh?

Young Wild. Ha, ha, ha! It was me.

Sir James. You!

Pap. You, sir!

Young Wild. Moi—me.

Pap. So, so, so; he's entered again.

Sir James. Why, you are fortunate to find a mistress in so short a space of time.

Young Wild. Short! why, man, I have been in London these six weeks.

Pap. O Lord, O Lord!

Young Wild. It is true, not caring to encounter my father, I have rarely ventured out but at nights.

Pap. I can hold no longer! Dear sir——

Young Wild. Peace, puppy!

Pap. A curb to your poetical vein!

Young Wild. I shall curb your impertinence ——But since the story is got abroad, I will, my dear friend, treat you with all the particulars.

Sir James. I shall hear it with pleasure—— This is a lucky adventure: but he must not know he is my rival. [*Aside.*

Young Wild. Why, sir, between six and seven my goddess embarked at Somerset-stairs, in one of the company's barges, gilt and hung with damask, expressly for the occasion.

Pap. Mercy on us!

Young Wild. At the cabin-door she was accosted by a beautiful boy, who, in the garb of a Cupid, paid her some compliments in verse of my own composing. The conceits were pretty; allusions to Venus and the sea—the lady and the Thames—no great matter; but, however, well timed, and, what was better, well taken.

Sir James. Doubtless.

Pap. At what a rate he runs!

Young Wild. As soon as we had gained the centre of the river, two boats, full of trumpets, French-horns, and other martial music, struck up their sprightly strains from the Surry side, which were echoed by a suitable number of lutes, flutes, and hautboys, from the opposite shore. In this state, the oars keeping time, we majestically sailed along, till the arches of the New Bridge gave a pause, and an opportunity for an elegant dessert in Dresden China, by Robinson. Here the repast closed with a few favourite airs from Eliza, Tenducci, and the Mattei.

Pap. Mercy on us!

Young Wild. Opposite Lambeth, I had prepared a naval engagement, in which Boscawen's victory over the French was repeated: the action was conducted by one of the commanders on that expedition, and not a single incident omitted.

Sir James. Surely you exaggerate a little!

Pap. Yes, yes, this battle will sink him.

Young Wild. True to the letter, upon my honour! I shan't trouble you with a repetition of our collation, ball, feu d'artifice, with the thousand little incidental amusements that chance or design produced: it is enough to know, that all that could flatter the senses, fire the imagination, or gratify the expectation, was there produced in a lavish abundance.

Sir James. The sacrifice was, I presume, grateful to your deity?

Young Wild. Upon that subject you must pardon my silence.

Pap. Modest creature!

Sir James. I wish you joy of your success— For the present you will excuse me.

Young Wild. Nay, but stay, and hear the conclusion.

Sir James. For that I shall seize another occasion. [*Exit* SIR JAMES.

Pap. Nobly performed, sir!

Young Wild. Yes; I think happily hit off.

Pap. May I take the liberty to offer one question?

Young Wild. Freely.

Pap. Pray, sir, are you often visited with these waking dreams?

Young Wild. Dreams! what dost mean by dreams!

Pap. Those ornamental reveries, those frolics of fancy, which, in the judgment of the vulgar, would be deemed absolute flams.

Young Wild. Why, Papillion, you have but a poor, narrow, circumscribed genius?

Pap. I must own, sir, I have not sublimity sufficient to relish the full fire of your Pindaric muse.

Young Wild. No; a plebeian soul! But I will animate thy clay: mark my example, follow my steps, and, in time, thou may'st rival thy master.

Pap. Never, never, sir; I have not talents to fight battles without blows, and give feasts that don't cost me a farthing—Besides, sir, to what purpose are all these embellishments? Why tell the lady you have been in London a year?

Young Wild. The better to plead the length, and consequently the strength, of my passion.

Pap. But why, sir, a soldier?

Young Wild. How little thou knowest of the sex! What, I suppose thou would'st have me attack them in mood and figure, by a pedantic classical quotation, or a pompous parade of jargon from the schools? What, dost think that women are to be got like degrees?

Pap. Nay, sir——

Young Wild. No, no; the scavoir vivre is the science for them! the man of war is their man: they must be taken like towns, by lines of approach, counterscarps, angles, trenches, coehorns, and covert-ways; then enter sword-in-hand, pell mell! Oh, how they melt at the Gothic names of general Swapinback, count Rousomousky, prince Montecuculli, and marshal Fustinburg! Men may say what they will of their Ovid, their Petrarch, and their Waller; but I'll undertake to do more business by the single aid of the London Gazette, than by all the sighing, dying, crying crotchets, that the whole race of rhymers have ever produced.

Pap. Very well, sir, this is all very lively; but remember the travelling pitcher; if you don't one time or other, under favour, lie yourself into some confounded scrape, I will be content to be hanged.

Young Wild. Do you think so, Papillion? And whenever that happens, if I don't lie myself out of it again, why, then, I will be content to be crucified. And so, along after the lady—[*Stops short, going out.*]—Zounds, here comes my father! I must fly. Watch him, Papillion, and bring me word to Cardigan.

[*Exeunt separately.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A room in a tavern.*

YOUNG WILDING *and* PAPILLION *rising from table.*

Young Wild. GAD, I had like to have run into the old gentleman's mouth.

Pap. It is pretty near the same thing; for I saw him join sir James Elliot: so your arrival is no longer a secret.

Young Wild. Why, then, I must lose my pleasure, and you your preferment: I must submit to the dull decency of a sober family, and you to the customary duties of brushing and powdering. But I was so fluttered at meeting my father, that I forgot the fair: prithee, who is she?

Pap. There were two.

Young Wild. That I saw.

Pap. From her footman I learnt her name was Godfrey.

Young Wild. And her fortune?

Pap. Immense.

Young Wild. Single, I hope?

Pap. Certainly.

Young Wild. Then will I have her.

Pap. What, whether she will or no?

Young Wild. Yes.

Pap. How will you manage that?

Young Wild. By making it impossible for her to marry any one else.

Pap. I don't understand you, sir.

Young Wild. Oh, I shall only have recourse to that talent you so mightily admire. You will see, by the circulation of a few anecdotes, how soon I will get rid of my rivals.

Pap. At the expence of the lady's reputation, perhaps?

Young Wild. That will be as it happens.

Pap. And have you no qualms, sir?

Young Wild. Why, where's the injury?

Pap. No injury to ruin her fame!

Young Wild. I will restore it to her again.

Pap. How?

Young Wild. Turn tinker, and mend it myself.

Pap. Which way?

Young Wild. The old way: solder it by marriage: that, you know, is the modern salve for every sore.

Enter Waiter.

Wait. An elderly gentleman to enquire for Mr Wilding.

Young Wild. For me! What sort of a being is it?

Wait. Being, sir?

Young Wild. Ay; how is he dressed?

Wait. In a tie wig, and snuff-coloured coat.

Pap. Zooks, sir, it is your father!

Young Wild. Show him up.

[*Exit Waiter.*

Pap. And what must I do?

Young Wild. Recover your broken English, but preserve your rank: I have a reason for it.

Enter OLD WILDING.

Old Wild. Your servant, sir: you are welcome to town.

Young Wild. You have just prevented me, sir: I was preparing to pay my duty to you.

Old Wild. If you thought it a duty, you should, I think, have sooner discharged it.

Young Wild. Sir!

Old Wild. Was it quite so decent, Jack, to be six weeks in town, and conceal yourself only from me?

Young Wild. Six weeks! I have scarce been six hours.

Old Wild. Come, come; I am better informed.

Young Wild. Indeed, sir, you are imposed upon. This gentleman (whom, first, give me the leave, to have the honour of introducing to you), this, sir, is the marquis de Chatteau Brilliant, of an ancient house in Brittany; who, travelling through England, chose to make Oxford for some time the place of his residence, where I had the happiness of his acquaintance.

Old Wild. Does he speak English?

Young Wild. Not fluently; but understands it perfectly.

Pap. Pray, sir———

Old Wild. Any services, sir, that I can render you here, you may readily command.

Pap. *Beaucoup d'honneur.*

Young Wild. This gentleman, I say, sir, whose quality and country are sufficient securities for his veracity, will assure you, that yesterday we left Oxford together.

Old Wild. Indeed!

Pap. *C'est vrai.*

Old Wild. This is amazing! I was at the same time informed of another circumstance, too, that, I confess, made me a little uneasy, as it interfered with a favourite scheme of my own.

Young Wild. What could that be, pray, sir?

Old Wild. That you had conceived a violent affection for a fair lady.

Young Wild. Sir!

Old Wild. And had given her very gallant and very expensive proofs of your passion.

Young Wild. Me, sir!

Old Wild. Particularly last night; music, collations, balls, and fire-works.

Young Wild. Monsieur le marquis! and pray, sir, who could tell you all this?

Old Wild. An old friend of yours.

Young Wild. His name, if you please?

Old Wild. Sir James Elliot.

Young Wild. Yes; I thought he was the man.

Old Wild. Your reason?

Young Wild. Why, sir, though sir James Elliot has a great many good qualities, and is, upon the whole, a valuable man, yet he has one fault which has long determined me to drop his acquaintance.

Old Wild. What may that be?

Young Wild. Why, you can't, sir, be a stranger to his prodigious skill in the traveller's talent?

Old Wild. How?

Young Wild. Oh, notorious to a proverb! His friends, who are tender of his fame, gloss over his foible, by calling him an agreeable novelist; and so he is with a vengeance. Why, he will tell ye more lies in an hour, than all the circulating libraries, put together, will publish in a year.

Old Wild. Indeed!

Young Wild. Oh, he is the modern Mandeville at Oxford: he was always distinguished by the facetious appellation of the Bouncer.

Old Wild. Amazing!

Young Wild. Lord, sir, he is so well understood in his own country, that, at the last Hereford assize, a cause, as clear as the sun, was absolutely thrown away by his being merely mentioned as a witness.

Old Wild. A strange turn!

Young Wild. Unaccountable. But there, I think, they went a little too far; for, if it had come to an oath, I don't think he would have bounced, neither; but, in common occurrences, there is no repeating after him. Indeed, my great reason for dropping him, was, that my credit began to be a little suspected, too.

Pap. Poor gentleman!

Old Wild. Why, I never heard this of him.

Young Wild. That may be; but can there be a stronger proof of his practice, than the flam he has been telling you of fire-works, and the Lord know's-what! And, I dare swear, sir, he was very fluent and florid in his description?

Old Wild. Extremely.

Young Wild. Yes, that is just his way; and not a syllable of truth from the beginning to the ending, marquis!

Pap. Oh, dat is all a fiction, upon mine honour.

Young Wild. You see, sir———

Old Wild. Clearly. I really can't help pitying the poor man. I have heard of people, who, by long habit, become a kind of constitutional liars.

Young Wild. Your observation is just; that is exactly his case.

Pap. I'm sure it's yours. [*Aside.*

Old Wild. Well, sir, I suppose we shall see you this evening?

Young Wild. The marquis has an appointment with some of his countrymen, which I have promised to attend: besides, sir, as he is an entire stranger in town, he may want my little services.

Old Wild. Where can I see you in about an hour? I have a short visit to make, in which you are deeply concerned.

Young Wild. I shall attend your commands; but where?

Old Wild. Why, here. Marquis, I am your obedient servant.

Pap. *Votre serviteur tres humble.*

[*Exit* OLD WILD.

Young Wild. So, Papillion, that difficulty is dispatched. I think I am even with sir James for his tattling.

Pap. Most ingeniously managed! but are not you afraid of the consequence?

Young Wild. I don't comprehend you.

Pap. A future explanation between the parties.

Young Wild. That may embarrass: but the day is distant. I warrant I will bring myself off.

Pap. It is in vain for me to advise.

Young Wild. Why, to say truth, I do begin to find my system attended with danger. Give me your hand, Papillion—I will reform.

Pap. Ah, sir!

Young Wild. I positively will. Why, this practice may, in time, destroy my credit.

Pap. That is pretty well done already. [*Aside.*] Ay, think of that, sir.

Young Wild. Well, if I don't turn out the merest dull matter-of-fact fellow——But, Papillion, I must scribble a billet to my new flame. I think her name is———

Pap. Godfrey; her father, an India governor, shut up in the strong room at Calcutta, left her all his wealth: she lives near Miss Grantham, by Grosvenor-square.

Young Wild. A governor! O ho! Bushels of rupees, and pecks of pagodas, I reckon. Well, I long to be rummaging. But the old gentleman will soon return: I will hasten to finish my letter. But, Papillion, what could my father mean by a visit, in which I am deeply concerned?

Pap. I can't guess.

Young Wild. I shall know presently. To Miss Godfrey, formerly of Calcutta, now residing in Grosvenor-square. Papillion, I won't tell her a word of a lie.

Pap. You won't, sir?

Young Wild. No; it would be ungenerous to deceive a lady. No; I will be open, candid, and sincere.

Pap. And if you are, it will be the first time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An apartment in* MISS GRANTHAM'S *house.*

Enter MISS GRANTHAM *and* MISS GODFREY.

Miss God. And you really like this gallant spark?

Miss Gran. Prodigiously! Oh, I'm quite in love with his assurance! I wonder who he is: he can't have been long in town: a young fellow of his easy impudence must have soon made his way into the best of company.

Miss God. By way of amusement, he may prove no disagreeable acquaintance; but you can't, surely, have any serious designs upon him?

Miss Gran. Indeed, but I have.

Miss God. And poor sir James Elliot is to be discarded at once?

Miss Gran. Oh, no!

Miss God. What is your intention in regard to him!

Miss Gran. Hey? I can't tell you. Perhaps, if I don't like this new man better, I may marry him.

Miss God. Thou art a strange, giddy girl.

Miss Gran. Quite the reverse; a perfect pattern of prudence; why, would you have me less careful of my person, than my purse?

Miss God. My dear?

Miss Gran. Why, I say, child, my fortune being in money, I have some in India-bonds, some in the bank, some on this loan, some on the other! so that if one fund fails, I have a sure resource in the rest.

Miss God. Very true.

Miss Gran. Well, my dear, just so I manage my love-affairs: If I should not like this man—if he should not like me—if we should quarrel—if, if—or in short, if any of the ifs should happen, which you know break engagements every day, why, by this means I shall be never at a loss.

Miss God. Quite provident! Well, and pray on how many different securities have you at present placed out your love?

Miss Gran. Three: The sober sir James Elliot; the new America-man; and this morning I expect a formal proposal from an old friend of my father.

Miss God. Mr Wilding?

Miss Gran. Yes; but I don't reckon much upon him: for you know, my dear, what can I do with an aukward, raw, college cub! Though, upon second thoughts, that mayn't be too bad neither; for as I must have the fashioning of him, he may be easily moulded to one's mind.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Mr Wilding, madam.

Miss Gran. Show him in. [*Exit Servant.*—You need not go, my dear: we have no particular business.

Miss God. I wonder, now, what she calls particular business.

Enter OLD WILDING.

Old Wild. Ladies, your servant. I wait upon you, madam, with a request from my son, that he may be permitted the honour of kissing your hand.

Miss Gran. Your son is in town, then?

Old Wild. He came last night, madam; and though but just from the university, I think I may venture to affirm with as little the air of a pedant as—

Miss Gran. I don't, Mr Wilding, question the accomplishments of your son; and shall own too, that his being descended from the old friend of my father is to me the strongest recommendation.

Old Wild. You honour me, madam.

Miss Gran. But, sir, I have something to say——

Old Wild. Pray, madam, speak out; it is impossible to be too explicit on these important occasions.

Miss Gran. Why then, sir, to a man of your wisdom and experience, I need not observe, that the loss of a parent to counsel and direct at this solemn crisis, has made a greater degree of personal prudence necessary in me.

Old Wild. Perfectly right, madam!

Miss Gran. We live, sir, in a very censorious world; a young woman can't be too much on her guard; nor should I choose to admit any man in the quality of a lover, if there was not at least a strong probability—

Old Wild. Of a more intimate connection. I hope, madam, you have heard nothing to the disadvantage of my son?

Miss Gran. Not a syllable: but you know, sir, there are such things in nature as unaccountable antipathies, aversions, that we take at first sight. I should be glad there could be no danger of that.

Old Wild. I understand you, madam: you shall have all the satisfaction imaginable: Jack is to meet me immediately; I will conduct him under your window; and if his figure has the misfortune to displease, I will take care his addresses shall never offend you. Your most obedient servant. [*Exit.*

Miss Gran. Now, there is a polite, sensible, old father for you!

Miss God. Yes; and a very discreet, prudent daughter he is likely to have. Oh, you are a great hypocrite, Kitty!

Enter a Servant.

Ser. A letter for you, madam. [*To Miss* GODFREY.] Sir James Elliot to wait on your ladyship. [*To Miss* GRANTHAM.]

Miss Gran. Lord, I hope he won't stay long here. He comes, and seems entirely wrapt up in the dismals: What can be the matter now?

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT.

Sir James. In passing by your door, I took the liberty, madam, of enquiring after your health.

Miss Gran. Very obliging. I hope, sir, you received a favourable account?

Sir James. I did not know but you might have caught cold last night.

Miss Gran. Cold? why, sir, I hope I didn't sleep with my bed-chamber window open!

Sir James. Madam!

Miss Gran. Sir!

Sir James. No, madam; but it was rather hazardous to stay so late upon the water.

Miss Gran. Upon the water!

Sir James. Not but the variety of amusements, it must be owned, were a sufficient temptation.

Miss Gran. What can he be driving at now?

Sir James. And pray, madam, what think you of Young Wilding? is not he a gay, agreeable, sprightly—

Miss Gran. I never give my opinion of people I don't know.

Sir James. You don't know him?

Miss Gran. No.

Sir James. And his father I did not meet at your door!

Miss Gran. Most likely you did.

Sir James. I am glad you own that, however: But for the son, you never———

Miss Gran. Set eyes upon him.

Sir James. Really?

Miss Gran. Really.

Sir James. Finely supported. Now, madam, do you know that one of us is just going to make a very ridiculous figure?

Miss Gran. Sir, I never had the least doubt of your talents for excelling in that way.

Sir James. Madam, you do me honour: but it does not happen to fall to my lot upon this occasion, however.

Miss Gran. And that is a wonder!—what, then, I am to be the fool of the comedy, I suppose?

Sir James. Admirably rallied! But I shall dash the spirit of that triumphant laugh.

Miss Gran. I dare the attack. Come on, sir!

Sir James. Know, then, and blush, if you are not lost to shame as dead to decency, that I am no stranger to last night's transactions.

Miss Gran. Indeed!

Sir James. From your first entering the barge at Somerset-house, to your last landing at Whitehall.

Miss Gran. Surprising!

Sir James. Cupids, collations, feasts, fireworks, all have reached me.

Miss Gran. Why, you deal in magic!

Sir James. My intelligence is as natural as it is infallible.

Miss Gran. May I be indulged with the name of your informer?

Sir James. Freely, madam. Only the very individual spark to whose folly you were indebted for this gallant profusion.

Miss Gran. But his name?

Sir James. Young Wilding.

Miss Gran. You had this story from him?

Sir James. I had.

Miss Gran. From Wilding!—That is amazing!

Sir James. Oh, oh! what, you are confounded at last, and no evasion, no subterfuge, no—

Miss Gran. Look'e, sir James; what you can mean by this strange story, and very extraordinary behaviour, it is impossible for me to conceive; but if it is meant as an artifice to palliate your infidelity to me, less pains would have answered your purpose.

Sir James. Oh, madam, I know you are provided.

Miss Gran. Matchless insolence! As you can't expect that I should be prodigiously pleased with the subject of this visit, you won't be surprised at my wishing it as short as possible.

Sir James. I don't wonder you feel pain at my presence; but you may rest secure you will have no interruption for me; and I really think it would be a pity to part two people so exactly formed for each other. Your ladyship's servant. [*Going.*]—But, madam, though your sex secures you from any farther resentment, yet the present object of your favour may have something to fear. [*Exit.*

Miss Gran. Very well. Now, my dear, I hope you will acknowledge the prudence of my plan. To what a pretty condition I must have been reduced, if my hopes had rested upon one lover alone!

Miss God. But are you sure that your method to multiply may not be the means to reduce the number of your slaves?

Miss Gran. Impossible!—Why, can't you discern that this flam of sir James Elliot's is a mere fetch to favour his retreat?

Miss God. And you never saw Wilding?

Miss Gran. Never.

Miss God. There is some mystery in this. I have, too, here in my hand, another mortification that you must endure.

Miss Gran. Of what kind?

Miss God. A little allied to the last: it is from the military spark you met this morning.

Miss Gran. What are the contents?

Miss God. Only a formal declaration of love.

Miss Gran. Why, you did not see him?

Miss God. But it seems he did me.

Miss Gran. Might I peruse it?—Battles—no wounds so fatal—cannon-balls—Cupid—spring a mine—cruelty—die on a counterscarp—eyes—artillery—death—the Stranger! It is addressed to you.

Miss God. I told you so.

Miss Gran. You will pardon me, my dear; but I really can't compliment you upon the supposition of a conquest at my expence.

Miss God. That would be enough to make me vain: But why do you think it was so impossible?

Miss Gran. And do you positively want a reason?

Miss God. Positively.

Miss Gran. Why, then, I shall refer you for an answer to a faithful counsellor, and most accomplished critic.

Miss God. Who may that be?

Miss Gran. The mirror upon your toilette.

Miss God. Perhaps we may differ in judgment.

Miss Gran. Why, can glasses flatter?

Miss God. I can't say I think that necessary.

Miss Gran. Saucy enough!—But come, child, don't let us quarrel upon so whimsical an occasion; time will explain the whole. You will favour me with your opinion of Young Wilding at my window.

Miss God. I attend you.

Miss Gran. You will forgive me, my dear, the little hint I dropt; it was meant merely to serve you; for indeed, child, there is no quality so insufferable in a young woman as self-conceit and vanity.

Miss God. You are most prodigiously obliging.

Miss Gran. I'll follow you, Miss. [*Exit* Miss GODFREY.] Pert thing!—She grows immoderately ugly. I always thought her aukward; but she is now an absolute fright.

Miss God. [*Within.*] Miss, Miss Grantam, your hero's at hand.

Miss Gran. I come.

Miss God. As I live, the very individual stranger!

Miss Gran. No, sure!—Oh Lord, let me have a peep.

Miss God. It is he, it is he, it is he! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The street.*

Enter OLD WILDING, YOUNG WILDING, *and* PAPILLION.

Old Wild. There, Marquis, you must pardon me; for, though Paris be more compact, yet surely London covers a much greater quantity—Oh, Jack, look at that corner house; how d'ye like it?

Young Wild. Very well; but I don't see any thing extraordinary.

Old Wild. I wish, though, you were the master of what it contains.

Young Wild. What may that be, sir?

Old Wild. The mistress, you rogue you: a fine girl, and an immense fortune; ay, and a prudent sensible wench into the bargain.

Young Wild. Time enough yet, sir.

Old Wild. I don't see that: You are, lad, the last of our race, and I should be glad to see some probability of its continuance.

Young Wild. Suppose, sir, you were to repeat your endeavours; you have cordially my consent.

Old Wild. No; rather too late in life for that experiment.

Young Wild. Why, sir, would you recommend a condition to me, that you disapprove of yourself?

Old Wild. Why, sirrah, I have done my duty to the public and my family, by producing you. Now, sir, it is incumbent on you to discharge your debt.

Young Wild. In the college cant, I shall beg leave to tick a little longer.

Old Wild. Why, then, to be serious, son, this is the very business I wanted to talk with you about. In a word, I wish you married; and, by providing the lady of that mansion for the purpose, I have proved myself both a father and a friend.

Young Wild. Far be it from me to question your care; yet some preparation for so important a change———

Old Wild. Oh, I will allow you a week.

Young Wild. A little more knowledge of the world.

Old Wild. That you may study at leisure.

Young Wild. Now all Europe is in arms, my design was to serve my country abroad.

Old Wild. You will be full as useful to it by recruiting her subjects at home.

Young Wild. You are then resolved?

Old Wild. Fixed.

Young Wild. Positively?

Old Wild. Peremptorily.

Young Wild. No prayers—

Old Wild. Can move me.

Young Wild. How the deuce shall I get out of this toil? [*Aside.*]—But suppose, sir, there should be an insurmountable objection?

Old Wild. Oh, leave the reconciling that to me; I am an excellent casuist.

Young Wild. But I say, sir, if it should be impossible to obey your commands?

Old Wild. Impossible!—I don't understand you.

Young Wild. Oh, sir!—But, on my knees, first let me crave your pardon.

Old Wild. Pardon! for what?

Young Wild. I fear I have lost all title to your future favour.

Old Wild. Which way?

Young Wild. I have done a deed——

Old Wild. Let's hear it.

Young Wild. At Abington, in the county of Berks.

Old Wild. Well?

Young Wild. I am——

Old Wild. What?

Young Wild. Already married.

Old Wild. Married!

Pap. Married!

Young Wild. Married.

Old Wild. And without my consent?

Young Wild. Compelled; fatally forced! Oh, sir! did you but know all the circumstances of my sad, sad story, your rage would soon convert itself to pity.

Old Wild. What an unlucky event!—But rise, and let me hear it all.

Young Wild. The shame and confusion I now feel, renders that task, at present, impossible; I must therefore rely for the relation on the good offices of this faithful friend.

Pap. Me, sir! I never heard one word of the matter.

Old Wild. Come, Marquis! favour me with the particulars.

Pap. Upon my vard, sire, dis affair has so shock me, dat I am almost as incapable to tell de tale as your son.—[*To* YOUNG WILD.]—Dry a your tears. What can I say, sir?

Young Wild. Any thing—Oh!—

[*Seems to weep.*

Pap. You see, sire—

Old Wild. Your kind concern at the misfortunes of my family, calls for the most grateful acknowledgment.

Pap. Dis is great misfortunes, sans doute.

Old Wild. But if you, a stranger, are thus affected, what must a father feel!

Pap. Oh, beaucoup; a great deal more.

Old Wild. But since the evil is without a remedy, let us know the worst at once. Well, sir, at Abington?

Pap. Yes, at Abington.

Old Wild. In the county of Berks?

Pap. Dat is right; in the county of Berks.

Young Wild. Oh, oh!

Old Wild. Ah, Jack, Jack! are all my hopes then—Though I dread to ask, yet it must be known; who is the girl, pray, sir?

Pap. De girl, sir—[*Aside to* YOUNG WILDING.]——Who shall I say?

Young Wild. Any body.

Pap. For de girl, I can't say, upon my vard.

Old Wild. Her condition?

Pap. Pas grande condition; dat is to be sure. But dere is no help—[*Aside to* YOUNG WILDING.]—Sir, I am quite a-ground.

Old Wild. Yes, I read my shame in his reserve: some artful hussy?

Pap. Dat may be. Vat you call hussy?

Old Wild. Or perhaps some common creature? But I'm prepared to hear the worst.

Pap. Have you no mercy?

Young Wild. I'll step to your relief, sir.

Pap. O Lord, a happy deliverance!

Young Wild. Though it is almost death for me to speak, yet it would be infamous to let the reputation of the lady suffer by my silence. She is, sir, of an ancient house, and unblemished character.

Old Wild. That is something.

Young Wild. And though her fortune may not be equal to the warm wishes of a fond father, yet———

Old Wild. Her name?

Young Wild. Miss Lydia Sybthorp.

Old Wild. Sybthorp!—I never heard of the name.—But proceed.

Young Wild. The latter end of last long vacation, I went with sir James Elliot, to pass a few days at a new purchase of his, near Abington. There, at an assembly, it was my chance to meet and dance with this lady.

Old Wild. Is she handsome?

Young Wild. Oh, sir, more beautiful———

Old Wild. Nay, no raptures; but go on.

Young Wild. But to her beauty she adds politeness, affability, and discretion; unless she forfeited that character by fixing her affection on me.

Old Wild. Modestly observed.

Young Wild. I was deterred from a public declaration of my passion, dreading the scantiness of her fortune would prove an objection to you. Some private interviews she permitted.

Old Wild. Was that so decent?—But love and prudence, madness and reason.

Young Wild. One fatal evening, the twentieth of September, if I mistake not, we were in a retired room innocently exchanging mutual vows, when her father, whom we expected to sup abroad, came suddenly upon us. I had just time to conceal myself in a closet.

Old Wild. What, unobserved by him?

Young Wild. Entirely. But, as my ill stars would have it, a cat, of whom my wife is vastly fond, had, a few days before, lodged a litter of kitteus in the same place: I unhappily trod upon one of the brood; which so provoked the implacable mother, that she flew at me with the fury of a tiger.

Old Wild. I have observed those creatures very fierce in defence of their young.

Pap. I shall hate a cat as long as I live.

Young Wild. The noise roused the old gentleman's attention: he opened the door, and there discovered your son.

Pap. Unlucky.

Young Wild. I rushed to the door; but fatally my foot slipt at the top of the stairs, and down I came, tumbling to the bottom; the pistol in my hand went off by accident; this alarmed her three brothers in the parlour, who, with all their servants, rushed with united force upon me.

Old Wild. And so surprised you!

Young Wild. No, sir; with my sword I for some time made a gallant defence, and should have inevitably escaped; but a raw-boned, overgrown clumsy cook-wench, struck at my sword with a kitchen-poker, broke it in two, and compelled me to surrender at discretion; the consequence of which is obvious enough.

Old Wild. Natural. The lady's reputation, your condition, her beauty, your love, all combined to make marriage an unavoidable measure.

Young Wild. May I hope, then, you rather think me unfortunate than culpable?

Old Wild. Why, your situation is a sufficient excuse: all I blame you for, is, your keeping it a secret from me. With Miss Grantham, I shall make an aukward figure; but the best apology is the truth; I'll hasten and explain it to her all—Oh, Jack, Jack, this is a mortifying business!

Young Wild. Most melancholy!

[*Exit* OLD WILDING.

Pap. I am amazed, sir, that you have so carefully concealed this transaction from me.

Young. Wild. Heyday! what! do you believe it too?

Pap. Believe it! why, is not the story of the marriage true?

Young Wild. Not a syllable.

Pap. And the cat, and the pistol, and the poker?

Young Wild. All invention. And were you really taken in?

Pap. Lord, sir, how was it possible to avoid it?—Mercy on us! what a collection of circumstances have you crowded together!

Young Wild. Genius! the mere effects of genius, Papillion. But to deceive you, who so thoroughly know me!

Pap. But to prevent that for the future, could you not just give your humble servant a hint, when you are bent upon bouncing? Besides, sir, if you recollect your fixed resolution to reform!

Young Wild. Ay, as to matter of fancy, the mere sport and frolic of invention: but in case of necessity—why, Miss Godfrey was at stake, and I was forced to use all my finesse.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Two letters, sir. [*Exit.*

Pap. There are two things, in my conscience, my master will never want; a prompt lie, and a ready excuse for telling of it.

Young Wild. Hum! business begins to thicken upon us: A challenge from sir James Elliot, and a rendezvous from the pretty Miss Godfrey. They shall both be observed, but in their order; therefore, the lady first. Let me see—I have not been twenty hours in town, and I have already got a challenge, a mistress, and a wife; now, if I can get engaged in a chancery-suit, I shall have my hands pretty full of employment. Come, Papillion, we have no time to be idle.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An apartment in* MISS GODFREY'S *house.*

Enter MISS GRANTHAM *and* MISS GODFREY.

Miss God. Upon my word, Miss Grantham, this is but an idle piece of curiosity: you know the man is already disposed of, and therefore—

Miss Gran. That is true, my dear; but there is in this affair some mystery, that I must and will have explained.

Miss God. Come, come, I know the grievance. You can't brook that this spark, though even a married man, should throw off his allegiance to you, and enter a volunteer in my service.

Miss Gran. And so you take the fact for granted?

Miss God. Have I not his letter?

Miss Gran. Conceited creature! I fancy, miss, by your vast affection for this letter, it is the first of the kind you have ever received.

Miss God. Nay, my dear, why should you be piqued at me? the fault is none of mine; I dropt no handkerchief; I threw out no lure; the bird came willingly to hand, you know.

Miss Gran. Metaphorical, too! What, you are setting up for a wit, as well as a belle!—— Why, really, madam, to do you justice, you have full as fine pretensions to one as the other.

Miss God. I fancy, madam, the world will not form their judgment of either from the report of a disappointed rival.

Miss Gran. Rival! admirably rallied—But, let me tell you, madam, this sort of behaviour, madam, at your own house, whatever may be your beauty, is no great proof of your breeding, madam.

Miss God. As to that, madam, I hope I shall always show a proper resentment to any insult that is offered me, let it be in whose house it will. The assignation, madam, both time and place, was of your own contriving.

Miss Gran. Mighty well, madam!

Miss God. But if, dreading a mortification, you think proper to alter your plan, your chair, I believe, is in waiting.

Miss Gran. It is, madam! then, let it wait—Oh, what? that was your scheme! but it won't take, miss: the contrivance is a little too shallow.

Miss God. I don't understand you.

Miss Gran. Cunning creature! So, all this insolence was concerted, it seems; a plot to drive me out of the house, that you might have the fellow all to yourself? but I have a regard for your character, though you neglect it. Fie, miss! a passion for a married man! I really blush for you!

Miss God. And I most sincerely pity you.—But curb your choler a little: the enquiry you are about to make requires rather a cooler disposition of mind; and by this time the hero is at hand.

Miss Gran. Mighty well; I am prepared.—But, Miss Godfrey, if you really wish to be acquitted of all artificial underhand dealings in this affair, suffer me, in your name, to manage the interview.

Miss God. Most willingly: but he will recollect your voice.

Miss Gran. Oh, that is easily altered.

Enter a maid, who whispers MISS GRANTHAM, *and exit.*

It is he; but hide yourself, miss, if you please.

Miss God. Your hood a little forwarder, miss; you may be known, and then, we shall have the language of politeness inflamed to proofs of a violent passion.

Miss Gran. You are prodigiously cautious!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The street.*

Enter YOUNG WILDING.

Young Wild. This rendezvous is something in the Spanish taste, imported, I suppose, with the guitar. At present, I presume the custom is confined to the great; but it will descend; and, in a couple of months, I shall not be surprised to hear an attorney's hackney-clerk rousing at midnight a milliner's prentice, with an *Ally, Ally Croker.* But that, if I mistake not, is the temple; and see my goddess herself. Miss Godfrey!

[MISS GRANTHAM *appears at the balcony.*

Miss Gran. Hush!

Young Wild. Am I right, miss?

Miss Gran. Softly! You received my letter, I see, sir.

Young Wild. And flew to the appointment with more———

Miss Gran. No raptures, I beg! But you must not suppose this meeting meant to encourage your hopes.

Young Wild. How, madam!

Miss Gran. Oh, by no means, sir! for, though I own your figure is pleasing, and your conversation——

Miss God. Hold, miss; when did I ever converse with him? [*From within.*

Miss Gran. Why, did not you see him in the Park?

Miss God. True, madam; but the conversation was with you.

Miss Gran. Bless me, you are very difficult! I say, sir, though your person may be unexceptionable, yet your character——

Young Wild. My character!

Miss Gran. Come, come, you are better known than you imagine.

Young Wild. I hope not.

Miss Gran. Your name is Wilding.

Young Wild. How the deuce came she by that! True, madam.

Miss Gran. Pray, have you never heard of a Miss Grantham?

Young Wild. Frequently.

Miss Gran. You have? And had you never any favourable thoughts of that lady: Now, mind, miss.

Young Wild. If you mean as a lover, never. The lady did me the honour to have a small design upon me.

Miss God. I hear every word, miss.

Miss Gran. But you need not lean so heavy upon me! he speaks loud enough to be heard! I have been told, sir, that———

Young Wild. Yes, madam, and very likely by the lady herself.

Miss Gran. Sir!

Young Wild. Oh, madam, I have another obligation in my pocket to Miss Grantham, which must be discharged in the morning.

Miss Gran. Of what kind?

Young Wild. Why, the lady, finding an old humble servant of her's a little lethargic, has thought fit to administer me in a jealous draught, in order to quicken his passion.

Miss Gran. Sir, let me tell you———

Miss God. Have a care! you will betray yourself.

Young Wild. Oh, the whole story will afford you infinite diversion; such a farrago of fights and feasts. But, upon my honour, the girl has a fertile invention.

Miss God. So! what, that story was yours; was it?

Young Wild. Pray, madam, don't I hear another voice?

Miss Gran. A distant relation of mine.——Every syllable false. But, sir, we have another charge against you. Do you know any thing of a lady at Abington?

Young Wild. Miss Grantham again. Yes, madam, I have some knowledge of that lady.

Miss Gran. You have? Well, sir, and that being the case, how could you have the assurance——

Young Wild. A moment's patience, madam! That lady, that Berkshire lady, will, I can assure you, prove no bar to my hopes.

Miss Gran. How, sir? no bar?

Young Wild. Not in the least, madam; for that lady exists in idea only.

Miss Gran. No such person?

Young Wild. A mere creature of the imagination.

Miss Gran. Indeed!

Young Wild. The attacks of Miss Grantham were so powerfully enforced, too, by paternal authority, that I had no method of avoiding the blow, but by the sheltering myself under the conjugal shield.

Miss Gran. You are not married, then? But what credit can I give to the professions of a man, who, in an article of such importance, and to a person of such respect——

Young Wild. Nay, madam, surely Miss Godfrey should not accuse me of a crime her own charms have occasioned. Could any other motive, but the fear of losing her, prevail on me to trifle with a father, or compel me to infringe those laws, which I have hitherto so inviolably observed?

Miss Gran. What laws, sir?

Young Wild. The sacred laws of truth, madam.

Miss Gran. There, indeed, you did yourself an infinite violence. But when the whole of the affair is discovered, will it be so easy to get rid of Miss Grantham? The violence of her passion, and the old gentleman's obstinacy——

Young Wild. Are nothing to a mind resolved.

Miss Gran. Poor Miss Grantham!

Young Wild. Do you know her, madam?

Miss Gran. I have heard of her: but you, sir, I suppose, have been long on an intimate footing?

Young Wild. Bred up together from children.

Miss Gran. Bravo! Is she handsome?

Young Wild. Her paint comes from Paris, and her femme de chambre is an excellent artist.

Miss Gran. Very well! Her shape?

Young Wild. Pray, madam, is not Curzon esteemed the best stay-maker for people inclined to be crooked?

Miss Gran. But as to the qualities of her mind; for instance, her understanding?

Young Wild. Uncultivated.

Miss Gran. Her wit?

Young Wild. Borrowed.

Miss Gran. Her taste?

Young Wild. Trifling.

Miss Gran. And her temper?

Young Wild. Intolerable.

Miss Gran. A finished picture! But come, these are not your real thoughts: this is a sacrifice you think due to the vanity of our sex.

Young Wild. My honest sentiments: and, to convince you how thoroughly indifferent I am to that lady, I would, upon my veracity, as soon take a wife from the Grand Signior's seraglio.—Now, madam, I hope you are satisfied?

Miss Gran. And you would not scruple to acknowledge this before the lady's face?

Young Wild. The first opportunity.

Miss Gran. That I will take care to provide you. Dare you meet me at her house?

Young Wild. When?

Miss Gran. In half an hour.

Young Wild. But won't a declaration of this sort appear odd at—a——

Miss Gran. Come, no evasion; your conduct and character seem to me a little equivocal, and I must insist on this proof at least of——

Young Wild. You shall have it.

Miss Gran. In half an hour?

Young Wild. This instant.

Miss Gran. Be punctual.

Young Wild. Or may I forfeit your favour.

Miss Gran. Very well; till then, sir, adieu! Now, I think, I have my spark in the toil; and if the fellow has any feeling, if I don't make him smart for every article! Come, my dear, I shall stand in need of your aid. [*Exit.*

Young Wild. So! I am now, I think, arrived at a critical period. If I can but weather this point——But why should I doubt it? it is in the day of distress only that a great man displays his abilities. But I shall want Papillion! where can the puppy be?

Enter PAPILLION.

Young Wild. So, sir, where have you been rambling?

Pap. I did not suppose you would want——

Young Wild. Want! you are always out of the way. Here have I been forced to tell forty lies upon my own credit, and not a single soul to vouch for the truth of them.

Pap. Lord, sir, you know——

Young Wild. Don't plague me with your apologies; but it is lucky for you that I want your assistance. Come with me to Miss Grantham's.

Pap. On what occasion?

Young Wild. An important one: but I'll prepare you as we walk.

Pap. Sir, I am really—I could wish you would be so good as to——

Young Wild. What! desert your friend in the heat of battle! Oh, you poltroon!

Pap. Sir, I would do any thing, but you know I have not talents.

Young Wild. I do; and, for my own sake, shall not task them too high.

Pap. Now, I suppose the hour is come when we shall pay for all.

Young Wild. Why, what a dastardly henhearted——But, come, Papillion, this shall be your last campaign. Don't droop, man; confide in your leader, and remember, *Sub auspice Teucro nil desperandum.*

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*An apartment in* MISS GRANTHAM'S *house.*

Enter a Servant, conducting in OLD WILDING.

Ser. My lady, sir, will be at home immediately; sir James Elliot is in the next room waiting her return.

Old Wild. Pray, honest friend, will you tell sir James that I beg the favour of a word with him? [*Exit Servant.*] This unthinking boy! Half the purpose of my life has been to plan this scheme for his happiness, and in one heedless hour has he mangled all.

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT.

Sir, I ask your pardon; but, upon so interesting a subject, I know you will excuse my intrusion.—Pray, sir, of what credit is the family of the Sybthorps in Berkshire?

Sir James. Sir!

Old Wild. I don't mean as to property; that I am not solicitous about; but as to their character: Do they live in reputation? Are they respected in the neighbourhood?

Sir James. The family of the Sybthorps!

Old Wild. Of the Sybthorps.

Sir James. Really, I don't know, sir.

Old Wild. Not know!

Sir James. No; it is the very first time I ever heard of the name.

Old Wild. How steadily he denies it! Well done, baronet! I find Jack's account was a just one. [*Aside.*] Pray, sir James, recollect yourself.

Sir James. It will be to no purpose.

Old Wild. Come, sir, your motive for this affected ignorance is a generous, but unnecessary, proof of your friendship for my son: but I know the whole affair.

Sir James. What affair?

Old Wild. Jack's marriage.

Sir James. What Jack?

Old Wild. My son Jack.

Sir James. Is he married?

Old Wild. Is he married! why, you know he is.

Sir James. Not I, upon my honour.

Old Wild. Nay, that is going a little too far: but to remove all your scruples at once, he has owned it himself.

Sir James. He has!

Old Wild. Ay, ay, to me. Every circumstance: Going to your new purchase at Abington—meeting Lydia Sybthorp at the assembly—their private interviews—surprised by the father—pistol—poker—and marriage; in short, every particular.

Sir James. And this account you had from your son?

Old Wild. From Jack; not two hours ago.

Sir James. I wish you joy, sir.

Old Wild. Not much of that, I believe.

Sir James. Why, sir, does the marriage displease you?

Old Wild. Doubtless.

Sir James. Then I fancy you may make yourself easy:

Old Wild. Why so?

Sir James. You have got, sir, the most prudent daughter-in-law in the British dominions.

Old Wild. I am happy to hear it.

Sir James. For, though she mayn't have brought you much, I'm sure she'll not cost you a farthing.

Old Wild. Ay; exactly Jack's account.

Sir James. She'll be easily jointured.

Old Wild. Justice shall be done her.

Sir James. No provision necessary for younger children.

Old Wild. No, sir! why not? I can tell you, if she answers your account, not the daughter of a duke——

Sir James. Ha, ha, ha!

Old Wild. You are merry, sir.

Sir James. What an unaccountable fellow!

Old Wild. Sir!

Sir James. I beg your pardon, sir. But with regard to this marriage——

Old Wild. Well, sir!

Sir James. I take the whole history to be neither more nor less than an absolute fable.

Old Wild. How, sir?

Sir James. Even so:

Old Wild. Why, sir, do you think my son would dare to impose upon me?

Sir James. Sir, he would dare to impose upon any body. Don't I know him?

Old Wild. What do you know?

Sir James. I know, sir, that his narratives gain him more applause than credit; and that, whether from constitution or habit, there is no believing a syllable he says.

Old Wild. Oh, mighty well, sir! He wants to turn the tables upon Jack. But it won't do; you are forestalled; your novels won't pass upon me.

Sir James. Sir!

Old Wild. Nor is the character of my son to be blasted with the breath of a bouncer.

Sir James. What is this?

Old Wild. No, no, Mr Mandeville, it won't do; you are as well known here as in your own county of Hereford.

Sir James. Mr Wilding, but that I am sure this extravagant behaviour owes its rise to some impudent impositions of your son, your age would scarce prove your protection.

Old Wild. Nor, sir, but that I know my boy equal to the defence of his own honour, should he want a protector in this arm, withered and impotent as you may think it.

Enter MISS GRANTHAM.

Miss Gran. Bless me, gentlemen, what is the meaning of this?

Sir James. No more at present, sir: I have another demand upon your son; we'll settle the whole together.

Old Wild. I am sure he will do you justice.

Miss Gran. How, sir James Elliot! I flattered myself that you had finished your visits here, sir. Must I be the eternal object of your outrage, not only insulted in my own person, but in that of my friends? Pray, sir, what right——

Old Wild. Madam, I ask your pardon; a disagreeable occasion brought me here: I come, madam, to renounce all hopes of being nearer allied to you, my son, unfortunately, being married already.

Miss Gran. Married!

Sir James. Yes, madam, to a lady in the clouds: and because I have refused to acknowledge her family, this old gentleman has behaved in a manner very inconsistent with his usual politeness.

Old Wild. Sir, I thought this affair was to be reserved for another occasion; but you, it seems——

Miss Gran. Oh, is that the business! Why, I begin to be afraid that we are here a little in the wrong, Mr Wilding.

Old Wild. Madam!

Miss Gran. Your son has just confirmed sir James Elliot's opinion, at a conference under Miss Godfrey's window.

Old Wild. Is it possible?

Miss Gran. Most true; and assigned two most whimsical motives for the unaccountable tale.

Old Wild. What can they be?

Miss Gran. An aversion for me, whom he has seen but once! and an affection for Miss Godfrey, whom I am almost sure he never saw in his life.

Old Wild. You amaze me!

Miss Gran. Indeed, Mr Wilding, your son is a most extraordinary youth; he has finely perplexed us all. I think, sir James, you have a small obligation to him.

Sir James. Which I shall take care to acknowledge the first opportunity.

Old Wild. You have my consent. An abandoned profligate! Was his father a proper subject for his——But I discard him.

Miss Gran. Nay, now, gentlemen, you are rather too warm: I can't think Mr Wilding badhearted at the bottom. This is a levity——

Old Wild. How, madam, a levity?

Miss Gran. Take my word for it, no more: inflamed into habit by the approbation of his juvenile friends. Will you submit his punishment to me? I think I have the means in my hands, both to satisfy your resentments, and accomplish his cure into the bargain.

Sir James. I have no quarrel to him, but for the ill offices he has done me with you.

Miss Gran. D'ye hear, Mr Wilding? I am

afraid my opinion with sir James must cement the general peace.

Old Wild. Madam, I submit to any——

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Mr Wilding to wait upon you, madam. [*Exit.*

Miss Gran. He is punctual, I find. Come, good folks, you all act under my direction. You, sir, will get from your son, by what means you think fit, the real truth of the Abington business. You must likewise seemingly consent to his marriage with Miss Godfrey, whom I shrewdly suspect he has, by some odd accident, mistaken for me; the lady herself shall appear at your call. Come, sir James, you will withdraw. I intend to produce another performer, who will want a little instruction. Kitty!

Enter KITTY.

Let John shew Mr Wilding in to his father: then come to my dressing-room; I have a short scene to give you in study. [*Exit* KITTY.] The girl is lively, and, I warrant, will do her character justice. Come, sir James. Nay, no ceremony; we must be as busy as bees,

[*Exeunt* MISS GRANTHAM *and* SIR JAMES.

Old Wild. This strange boy! But I must command my temper.

Young Wild. [*Speaking as he enters.*] People to speak with me! See what they want, Papillion. My father here! that's unlucky enough.

Old Wild. Ha, Jack, what brings you here?

Young Wild. Why, I thought it my duty to wait upon Miss Grantham, in order to make her some apology for the late unfortunate——

Old Wild. Well, now, that is prudently as well as politely done.

Young Wild. I am happy to meet, sir, with your approbation.

Old Wild. I have been thinking, Jack, about my daughter-in-law: as the affair is public, it is not decent to let her continue longer at her father's.

Young Wild. Sir!

Old Wild. Would it not be right to send for her home?

Young Wild. Doubtless, sir.

Old Wild. I think so. Why, then, to-morrow my chariot shall fetch her.

Young Wild. The devil it shall! [*Aside.*] Not quite so soon, if you please, sir.

Old Wild. No! Why not?

Young Wild. The journey may be dangerous in her present condition.

Old Wild. What's the matter with her?

Young Wild. She is big with child, sir.

Old Wild. An audacious—Big with child! that is fortunate. But, however, an easy carriage, and short stages, can't hurt her.

Young Wild. Pardon me, sir, I dare not trust her: she is six months gone.

Old Wild. Nay then, there may be danger indeed. But should not I write to her father, just to let him know that you have discovered the secret?

Young Wild. By all means, sir; it will make him extremely happy.

Old Wild. Why, then, I will instantly about it. Pray, how do you direct to him?

Young Wild. Abington, Berkshire.

Old Wild. True; but his address?

Young Wild. You need not trouble yourself, sir: I shall write by this post to my wife, and will send your letter inclosed.

Old Wild. Ay, ay, that will do. [*Going.*

Young Wild. So! I have parried that thrust.

Old Wild. Though, upon second thoughts, Jack, that will rather look too familiar for an introductory letter.

Young Wild. Sir!

Old Wild. And these country gentlemen are full of punctilios——No, I'll send him a letter apart; so, give me his direction.

Young Wild. You have it, sir.

Old Wild. Ay; but his name: I have been so hurried that I have entirely forgot it.

Young Wild. I am sure so have I.—[*Aside.*] His name—his name, sir—Hopkins.

Old Wild. Hopkins!

Young Wild. Yes, sir.

Old Wild. That is not the same name that you gave me before—that, if I recollect, was either Sypthorp or Sybthorp.

Young Wild. You are right, sir—that is his paternal appellation—but the name of Hopkins he took for an estate of his mother's: so he is indiscriminately called Hopkins or Sybthorp; and now I recollect I have his letter in my pocket—he signs himself Sybthorp Hopkins.

Old Wild. There is no end of this: I must stop him at once. Hark ye, sir, I think you are called my son?

Young Wild. I hope, sir, you have no reason to doubt it.

Old Wild. And look upon yourself as a gentleman?

Young Wild. In having the honour of descending from you.

Old Wild. And that you think a sufficient pretension?

Young Wild. Sir—pray, sir—

Old Wild. And by what means do you imagine your ancestors obtained that distinguishing title? By their pre-eminence in virtue, I suppose?

Young Wild. Doubtless, sir.

Old Wild. And has it never occurred to you, that what was gained by honour might be lost by infamy?

Young Wild. Perfectly, sir.

Old Wild. Are you to learn what redress even

the imputation of a lie demands; and that nothing less than the life of the adversary can extinguish the affront?

Young Wild. Doubtless, sir.

Old Wild. Then, how dare you call yourself a gentleman? you, whose life has been one continued scene of fraud and falsity! And would nothing content you but making me a partner in your infamy? Not satisfied with violating that great band of society, mutual confidence, the most sacred rights of nature must be invaded, and your father made the innocent instrument to circulate your abominable impositions!

Young Wild. But, sir!

Old Wild. Within this hour my life was near sacrificed in defence of your fame: But, perhaps, that was your intention; and the story of your marriage merely calculated to send me out of the world, as a grateful return for my bringing you into it.

Young Wild. For heaven's sake, sir!

Old Wild. What other motive?

Young Wild. Hear me, I intreat you, sir.

Old Wild. To be again imposed on! no, Jack, my eyes are opened at last.

Young Wild. By all that's sacred, sir—

Old Wild. I am now deaf to your delusions.

Young Wild. But hear me, sir. I own the Abington business—

Old Wild. An absolute fiction?

Young Wild. I do.

Old Wild. And how dare you—

Young Wild. I crave but a moment's audience.

Old Wild. Go on.

Young Wild. Previous to the communication of your intention for me, I accidentally met with a lady, whose charms——

Old Wild. So!—what, here's another marriage trumped out? but that is a stale device. And, pray, sir, what place does this lady inhabit? Come, come, go on; you have a fertile invention, and this is a fine opportunity. Well, sir, and this charming lady, residing, I suppose, *in nubibus*—

Young Wild. No, sir; in London.

Old Wild. Indeed!

Young Wild. Nay, more, and at this instant in this house.

Old Wild. And her name—

Young Wild. Godfrey.

Old Wild. The friend of Miss Grantham?

Young Wild. The very same, sir.

Old Wild. Have you spoke to her?

Young Wild. Parted from her not ten minutes ago; nay, am here by her appointment.

Old Wild. Has she favoured your address?

Young Wild. Time, sir, and your approbation, will, I hope.

Old Wild. Look ye, sir, as there is some little probability in this story, I shall think it worth further inquiry. To be plain with you, I know Miss Godfrey; am intimate with her family; and though you deserve but little from me, I will endeavour to aid your intention. But if, in the progress of this affair, you practise any of your usual arts; if I discover the least falsehood, the least duplicity, remember you have lost a father.

Young Wild. I shall submit without a murmur. [*Exit* OLD WILD.

Enter PAPILLION.

Young Wild. Well, Papillion.

Pap. Sir, here has been the devil to pay within!

Young Wild. What's the matter?

Pap. A whole legion of cooks, confectioners, musicians, waiters, and watermen.

Young Wild. What do they want?

Pap. You, sir.

Young Wild. Me!

Pap. Yes, sir; they have brought in their bills.

Young Wild. Bills! for what?

Pap. For the entertainment you gave last night upon the water.

Young Wild. That I gave?

Pap. Yes, sir; you remember the bill of fare: I am sure the very mention of it makes my mouth water.

Young Wild. Prithee, are you mad? There must be some mistake; you know that I—

Pap. They have been vastly puzzled to find out your lodgings; but Mr Robinson meeting by accident with Sir James Elliot, he was kind enough to tell him where you lived. Here are the bills: Almack's, twelve dozen of claret; ditto champagne, frontiniac, sweatmeats, pine-apples; the whole amount is 372l. 9s. besides music and fire-works.

Young Wild. Come, sir, this is no time for trifling.

Pap. Nay, sir, they say they have gone full as low as they can afford; and they were in hopes, from the great satisfaction you expressed to sir James Elliot, that you would throw them in an additional compliment.

Young Wild. Hark ye, Mr Papillion, if you don't cease your impertinence, I shall pay you a compliment that you would gladly excuse.

Pap. Upon my faith, I relate but the mere matter of fact! You know, sir, I am but bad at invention; though this incident, I can't help thinking, is the natural fruit of your happy one.

Young Wild. But are you serious? is this possible?

Pap. Most certain. It was with difficulty I restrained their impatience; but, however, I have dispatched them to your lodgings, with a promise that you shall immediately meet them.

Young Wild. Oh, there we shall soon rid our hands of the troop.—Now, Papillion, I have news

for you. My father has got to the bottom of the whole Abington business.

Pap. The deuce!

Young Wild. We parted this moment. Such a scene!

Pap. And what was the issue?

Young Wild. Happy beyond my hopes! Not only an act of oblivion, but a promise to plead my cause with the fair.

Pap. With Miss Godfrey?

Young Wild. Who else!—He is now with her in another room.

Pap. And there is no—you understand me—in all this?

Young Wild. No, no; that is all over now—my reformation is fixed—

Pap. As a weather-cock.

Young Wild. Here comes my father.

Enter OLD WILDING.

Old Wild. Well, sir, I find, in this last article, you have condescended to tell me the truth: the young lady is not averse to your union; but, in order to fix so mutable a mind, I have drawn up a slight contract, which you are both to sign.

Young Wild. With transport!

Old Wild. I will introduce Miss Godfrey.

[*Exit* OLD WILD.

Young Wild. Did not I tell you, Papillion?

Pap. This is amazing, indeed!

Young Wild. Am not I a happy, fortunate—But they come.

Enter OLD WILDING *and* MISS GODFREY.

Old Wild. If, madam, he has not the highest sense of the great honour you do him, I shall cease to regard him.—There, sir, make your own acknowledgements to that lady.

Young Wild. Sir!

Old Wild. This is more than you merit; but let your future behaviour testify your gratitude.

Young Wild. Papillion! madam! sir!

Old Wild. What, is the puppy petrified! Why don't you go up to the lady?

Young Wild. Up to the lady!—That lady?

Old Wild. That lady!—To be sure. What other lady?—To Miss Godfrey.

Young Wild. That lady Miss Godfrey?

Old Wild. What is all this?—Hark ye, sir; I, see what you are at: but no trifling; I'll be no more the dupe of your double detestable—Recollect my last resolution: This instant your hand to the contract, or tremble at the consequence.

Young Wild. Sir, that, I hope, is—might not I—to be sure—

Old Wild. No further evasions! There, sir.

Young Wild. Heigh ho! [*Signs it.*]

Old Wild. Very well. Now, madam, your name, if you please?

Young Wild. Papillion, do you know who she is?

Pap. That's a question, indeed! Don't you, sir?

Young Wild. Not I, as I hope to be saved!

Enter a Servant.

Ser. A young lady begs to speak with Mr Wilding.

Young Wild. With me?

Miss God. A young lady with Mr Wilding?

Ser. Seems distressed, madam, and extremely pressing for admittance.

Miss God. Indeed! There may be something in this! You must permit me, sir, to pause a little: who knows but a prior claim may prevent—

Old Wild. Now, sir, who is this lady?

Young Wild. It is impossible for me to divine, sir.

Old Wild. You know nothing of her?

Young Wild. How should I?

Old Wild. You hear, madam.

Miss God. I presume your son can have no objection to the lady's appearance.

Young Wild. Not in the least, madam.

Miss God. Show her in, John. [*Exit Ser.*

Old Wild. No, madam, I don't think there is the least room for suspecting him: he can't be so abandoned as to—But she is here. Upon my word, a sightly woman!

Enter KITTY, *as* MISS SYBTHORP.

Kit. Where is he?—Oh, let me throw my arms—my life, my—

Young Wild. Heyday!

Kit. And could you leave me? and for so long a space? Think how the tedious time has lagged along.

Young Wild. Madam!

Kit. But we are met at last, and now will part no more!

Young Wild. The deuce we won't!

Kit. What! not one kind look! no tender word to hail our second meeting!

Young Wild. What the devil is all this?

Kit. Are all your oaths, your protestations, come to this? Have I deserved such treatment? Quitted my father's house, left all my friends, and wandered here alone in search of thee, thou first, last, only object of my love?

Old Wild. To what can all this tend? Hark ye, sir, unriddle this mystery.

Young Wild. Davus, non Œdipus sum. It is beyond me, I confess. Some lunatic escaped from her keeper, I suppose.

Kit. Am I disowned then, contemned, slighted?

Old Wild. Hold; let me inquire into this matter a little. Pray, madam——You seem to be pretty familiar here.—Do you know this gentleman!

Kit. Too well.

Old Wild. His name?

Kit. Wilding.

Old Wild. So far she is right. Now yours, if you please.

Kit. Wilding.

Omnes. Wilding!

Old Wild. And how came you by that name, pray?

Kit. Most lawfully, sir: by the sacred band, the holy tie, that made us one.

Old Wild. What! married to him?

Kit. Most true.

Omnes. How!

Young Wild. Sir, may I never—

Old Wild. Peace, monster!——One question more: Your maiden name?

Kit. Sybthorp.

Old Wild. Lydia, from Abington, in the county of Berks?

Kit. The same.

Old Wild. As I suspected. So, then, the whole story is true, and the monster is married at last!

Young Wild. Me, sir! By all that's——

Old Wild. Eternal dumbness seize thee, measureless liar?

Young Wild. If not me, hear this gentleman ——Marquis—

Pap. Not I; I'll be drawn into none of your scrapes: it is a pit of your own digging; and so get out as well as you can. Mean time I'll shift for myself. [*Exit* PAP.

Old Wild. What evasion now, monster?

Miss God. Deceiver!

Old Wild. Liar!

Miss God. Impostor!

Young Wild. Why, this is a general combination to distract me; but I will be heard. Sir, you are grossly imposed upon: the low contriver of this woman's shallow artifice I shall soon find means to discover; and as to you, madam, with whom I have been suddenly surprised into a contract, I most solemnly declare this is the first time I ever set eyes on you.

Old Wild. Amazing confidence! Did not I bring her at your own request?

Young Wild. No.

Miss God. Is not this your own letter?

Young Wild. No.

Kit. Am not I your wife?

Young Wild. No.

Old Wild. Did not you own it to me?

Young Wild. Yes---that is---no, no.

Kit. Hear me.

Young Wild. No.

Miss God. Answer me.

Young Wild. No.

Old Wild. Have not I—

Young Wild. No, no, no. Zounds! you are all mad; and, if I stay, I shall catch the infection. [*Exit* YOUNG WILD.

Enter SIR JAMES ELLIOT, *and* MISS GRANTHAM.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Gran. Finely performed!

Old Wild. You have kept your promise; and I thank you, madam.

Miss Gran. My medicine was somewhat rough, sir; but in desperate cases, you know—

Old Wild. If his cure is completed, he will gratefully acknowledge the cause; if not, the punishment comes far short of his crimes. It is needless to pay you any compliments, sir James; with that lady you can't fail to be happy. I shan't venture to hint a scheme I have greatly at heart, till we have undeniable proofs of the success of our operations. To the ladies, indeed, no character is so dangerous as that of a liar:

They in the fairest fames can fix a flaw,
And vanquish females, whom they never saw.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE ORATORS.

BY

FOOTE.

THE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

ARE,

FOOTE, *representing a Lecturer upon Oratory—his Pupils—and the Spectators.*

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter WILL TIREHACK *and* HARRY SCAMPER, *booted, with whips in their hands, into a side-box.*

Scam. PSHA! zounds! prithee, Will, let us go; what signifies our staying here!

Tire. Nay, but tarry a little: besides, you know we promised to give Poll Bayless and Bett Skinner the meeting.

Scam. No matter; we shall be sure to find them at three, at the Shakespeare.

Tire. But as we are here, Harry, let us know a little what 'tis about?

Scam. About! Why lectures, you fool! Have not you read the bills? and we have plenty of them at Oxford, you know.

Tire. Well, but for all that, there may be fun.

Scam. Why, then, stay and enjoy it yourself; and I'll step to the Bull and Gate, and call upon Jerry Lack-Latin and my horse. We shall see you at three? [*Rising.*

Tire. Nay, but, prithee, stay.

Scam. Rot me, if I do! [*Going out of the box.*

Tire. Halloo, Harry! Harry——

Scam. Well, what's the matter now? [*Returning.*

Tire. Here's Poll Bayless just come into the gallery.

Scam. No——

Tire. She is, by——

Scam. [*Looking.*] Yes, faith! it is she, sure enough—How goes it, Poll?

Tire. Well, now, we shall have you, I hope?

Scam. Ay, if I thought we should get any fun.

Tire. I'll make an inquiry. Halloo! snuffers, snuffers!

Candle-snuffer. Your pleasure, sir?

Tire. What is all this business about here?

Snuf. Can't say, sir.

Scam. Well, but you could if you would; let us into the secret!

Snuf. Not I, upon my honour!

Tire. Your honour, you son of a whore! D'ye hear? bid your master come hither; we want to ask him a question.

Snuf. I will. [*Exit.*

Tire. Scamper, will you ask him, or shall I?

Scam. Let me alone to him——

Enter FOOTE.

Tire. O! here he is——

Foote. Your commands with me, gentlemen?

Scam. Why, you must know, Will and I, here, are upon a scheme from Oxford; and because cash begins to run low——How much have you, Will?

Tire. Three and twenty shillings, besides the crown I paid at the door.

Scam. And I eighteen. Now, as this will last us but to-night, we are willing to husband our time; let us see—Will, how are we engaged?

Tire. Why, at three, with Bett and Poll there, at the Shakespeare: after that to the Coronation; for, you know, we have seen it but nine times———

Scam. And then back to the Shakespeare again; where we sup, and take horse at the door.

Tire. So, there's no time to be lost, you see; we desire, therefore, to know what sort of a thing this affair, here, of yours is? What, is it damned funny and comical?

Foote. Have you not seen the bills?

Scam. What, about the lectures? ay, but that's all slang, I suppose; no, no. No tricks upon travellers; no, we know better——What, are there any more of you; or do you do it all yourself?

Foote. If I was in want of comedians, you, gentlemen, are kind enough to lend me a lift; but, upon my word, my intentions, as the bill will inform you, are serious———

Tire. Are they? then I'll have my money again. What, do you think we come to London to learn any thing? Come, Will. [*Going.*

Foote. Hold, gentlemen; I will detain you, if possible. What is it you expect?

Scam. To be jolly, and laugh, to be sure—

Foote. At what?

Tire. At what—damme, I don't know—at you, and your frolics and fancies———

Foote. If that is all you desire, why, perhaps, we shan't disappoint you——

Scam. Shan't you? why, that is an honest fellow—come, begin——

Foote. But you'll be so kind as not to interrupt me?

Scam. Never fear.

Foote. Ladies and gentlemen——

[SUDS, *from the opposite box, calls to* FOOTE, *and stops him short.*]

Suds. Stop a minute! may I be permitted to speak?

Foote. Doubtless, sir.

Suds. Why, the affair is this. My wife Alice ——for, you must know, my name is Ephraim Suds, I am a soap-boiler in the city—took it into her head, and nothing would serve her turn but that I must be a common councilman this year; for, says Alice, says she, it is the onliest way to rise in the world.

Foote. A just observation! you succeeded?

Suds. Oh! there was no danger of that—yes, yes, I got it all hollow; but now to come to the marrow of the business. Well, Alice, says I, now I am chosen, what's next to be done? Why now, says Alice says she, thee must learn to make speeches; why dost not see what purferment neighbour Grogram has got; why, man, 'tis all brought about by his speechifying. I tell thee what, Ephraim, if thou canst but once learn to lay down the law, there's no knowing to what thee mayest rise—

Foote. Your lady had reason.

Suds. Why, I thought so too; and, as good luck would have it, who should come into the city, in the very nick of time, but master professor along with his lectures———Adod, away in a hurry Alice and I danced to Pewterer's Hall.

Foote. You improved, I hope?

Suds. O lud! it is unknown what knowledge we got! We can read—Oh! we never stop to spell a word, now—And then he told us such things about verbs, and nouns, and adverbs, that never entered our heads before, and emphasis, and accent; Heaven bless us! I did not think there had been such things in the world.

Foote. And have you speechified yet?

Suds. Soft; soft and fair! we must walk before we can run—I think I have laid a pretty foundation. The mansion-house was not built in a day, Master Foote. But to go on with my tale; my dame one day looking over the papers, came running to me; now, Ephraim, says she, thy business is done; rare news, lad; here is a man, at the other end of the town, that will make thee a speecher at once—and out she pulled your proposals. Ah, Alice, says I, thee be'st but a fool; why, I know that man, he is all upon his fun; he lecture! why, 'tis all but a bam—well, 'tis but seeing, says she; so, wolens nolens, she would have me come hither: now, if so be you be serious, I shall think my money wisely bestowed; but if it be only your comical works, I can tell you, you shall see me no more.

Foote. Sir, I should be extremely sorry to lose you, if I knew but what would content you.

Suds. Why, I want to be made an orator on; and to speak speeches, as I tell you, at our meetings, about politics, and peace, and addresses, and the new bridge, and all them kind of things.

Foote. Why, with your happy talents, I should think much might be done.

Suds. I am proud to hear you say so; indeed I am. I did speechify once at a vestry, concerning new-lettering the church-buckets, and came off cutely enough; and, to say the truth, that was the thing that provoked me to go to Pewterer's Hall.

[*Sits down again.*

Foote. Well, sir, I flatter myself, that, in proportion to the difference of abilities in your two instructors, you will here make a tolerable progress. But now, sir, with your favour, we will proceed to explain the nature of our design; and, I hope, in the process, you, gentlemen, will find entertainment, and you, sir, information.

MR FOOTE *then proceeds in his lecture.*

My plan, gentlemen, is to be considered as a superstructure on that admirable foundation laid by the modern professor of English, both our labours tending to the same general end, the perfectioning of our countrymen in a most essential article, the right use of their native language.—The English orators are to be divided into four distinct classes, the pulpit, the senate, the bar, and the stage. With the first of these branches, the pulpit, I shan't interfere; and, indeed, so few people, now, of consequence and consideration, frequent the churches, that the art is scarce worth cultivation. The bar——

Scam. Pshaw! there's enough of this dull prosing; come, give us a little of something that's funny; you talked about pupils. Could not we see them?

Foote. Rather too precipitate, sir; but, however, in some measure to satisfy you, and demonstrate the success of our scheme, give me leave to introduce to you a most extraordinary instance, in the person of a young Highlander. It is not altogether a year since this astonishing subject spoke nothing but Erse. Encouraged by the prodigies of my brother professor's skill, whose fame, like the Chevalier Taylor's, pierces the remotest regions, his relations were tempted to send this young genius to Edinburgh; where he went through a regular course of the professor's lectures, to finish his studies; he has been about six weeks under my care, and, considering the time, I think you will be amazed at his progress. Donald!

Enter DONALD.

Don. What's yer wull, sir?

Foote. Will you give these ladies and gentlemen a proof of your skill?

Don. Ah, ye wad ha' a specimen of my oratorical art?

Foote. If you please.

Don. In gude troth an ye sal; wul ye gi me a topic?

Foote. Oh, choose for yourself.

Don. It's aw ane to Donald.

Foote. What think you of a short panegyric on the science we are treating of?

Don. On oratory? Wi' aw my heart.

Foote. Mind your action; let that accompany your words——

Don. Dunna heed, man—the topic I presume to haundle, is the miraculous gifts of an orator, wha, by the bare power of his words, leads men, women, and bairns, as he lists——

Scam. And who?

Don. [*Tartly.*]—Men, women, and bairns.

Scam. Bairns! who are they?

Foote. Oh, children—his meaning is obvious enough.

Don. Ay, ay; men, women, and bairns, whereever he lists. And first for the antiquity of the art—Ken ye, my lads, wha was the first orator? Mayhap, ye think it was Tully the Latinist? Ye are wide o' the mark: or Demosthenes the Greek? In gude troth, ye're as far aff as before: wha was it, then? It was e'en that arch chiel, the deevil himsel——

Scam. [*Hastily.*]—The devil it was! How do you prove that?

Don. Guds zounds, mun, ye brak the thrid of my harang; an ye'll but haud your tongue, I'se prove it as plain as a pike-staff.

Tire. Be quiet, Will, and let him go on.

Don. I say it was that arch chiel, the deevil himsel. Ye ken weel, my lads, how Adam and Eve were planted in Eden, wi' plenty o' bannocks and kail, and aw that they wished, but were prohibited the eating of pepins———

Scam. Apples———

Don. Weel, weel, and are na pepins and apples aw the same thing?

Foote. Nay, pray, gentlemen, hear him out.—Go on with your pepins.

Don. Prohibited the eating of pepins; upon which, what does me the orator Satan, but he whispers a saft speech in her lug; egod, our grannum fell to in an instant, and eat a pepin without staying to pare it—[*Addresses himself to the Oronians.*]—Ken ye, lads, wha was the first orator, now?

Tire. [*To* SCAM.]—What say you to that?

Scam. By my soul, the fellow's right———

Don. Ay, but ye wunna ha' patience——ye wunna ha' patience, lads——

Tire. Hold your jaw, and go on——

Don. Now, we come to the definition of an orator: and it is from the Latin words, *oro, orare,* to intreat, or perswad; and how? by the means o' elocution or argument, which argument consists o' letters, which letters joined, mak syllables, which syllables compounded, mak words, which words combined, mak sentences or periods, or which, aw together, mak an orator; so the first gift of an orator is words———

Scam. Here, Donald, you are out.

Don. How so?

Scam. Words the first gifts of an orator! No, Donald, no, at school I learned better than that: do'st not remember, Will, what is the first perfection of an orator? action; the second, action; the third, action.

Tire. Right, right, Harry, as right as my nail; there, Donald, I think, he has given you a dose—

Don. An ye stay me in the midst o' my argument———

Scam. Why don't you stick to truth?

Don. I tell ye, I can, logically.

Tire. Damn your logic!——

Don. Mighty weel——Maister Foote, how ca' ye this usage?

Foote. Oh, never mind them—proceed.

Don. In gude troth, I'se no say ane word mare.

Foote. Finish, finish, Donald.

Don. Ah! they have jumbled aw my ideas thegether; but an they will enter into a fair argumentation, I'se convince them that Donald Macgregor is mare than a match.

Scam. You be———

Don. Very weel——

Foote. Nay, but, my dear Donald——

Don. Hands aff, Maister Foote—I ha' finished my tale; the deel a word mare sal ye get out o' Donald; ver servant, sir. [*Exit* DON.

Foote. You see, gentlemen, what your impatience has lost us.

Scam. Rot him, let him go! But is this fellow one of your pupils? Why, what a damnable twang he has got, with his men, women, and bairns———

Foote. His pronounciation is, I own, a little irregular; but then consider he is but merely a novice: why, even in his present condition, he makes no bad figure for his five minutes at the Pantheon and Lycæum; and in a month or two we shan't be ashamed to start him in a more respectable place. But now, gentlemen, we are to descend to the peculiar essential qualities of each distinct species of oratory; and first for the bar—but as no didactic rules can so well convey, or words make a proper impression, we will have recourse to more palpable means, and endeavour, by a lively imitation, to demonstrate the extent of our art. We must, for this end, employ the aid of our pupils; but as some preparation is necessary, we hope you will indulge us in a short interruption. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Hall of Justice.*

Enter FOOTE.

Foote. THE first species of oratory we are to demonstrate our skill in, is that of the bar; and in order to give our lecture an air of reality, you are to suppose this a court of justice, furnished with proper ministers to discharge the necessary functions. But to supply these gentlemen with business, we must likewise institute an imaginary cause; and, that the whole may be ideal, let it be the prosecution of an imaginary being; I mean the phantom of Cock-lane, a phenomenon that has much puzzled the brains, and terrified the minds, of many of our fellow-subjects. You are to consider, ladies and gentlemen, that the language of the bar is a species of oratory distinct from every other. It has been observed, that the ornaments of this profession have not shone with equal lustre in an assembly near their own hall; the reason assigned, though a pleasant, is not the true one. It has been hinted, that these gentlemen were in want of their briefs.—But were that the disease, the remedy would be easy enough; they need only have recourse to the artifice successfully practised by some of their colleagues; instead of having their briefs in their hands, to hide them at the bottom of their hats.

[*Calls to his pupils, who enter dressed as a justice, a clerk, a serjeant at law, and a counsellor.*]

You will remember, gentlemen, your proper pauses, repetitions, hums, ha's and interjections:—Now, seat yourselves; and you, the counsel, remember to be mighty dull, and you, the justices, to fall asleep. I must prepare to appear in this cause as a witness. [*Exit.*

Jus. Clerk, read the indictment.

Clerk. [*Reads.*]Middlesex, to wit.

'Fanny Phantom, you are indicted, That on 'or before the first day of January 1762, you the 'said Fanny did, in a certain house, in a certain 'street called *Cock-lane*, in the county of Mid-'dlesex, maliciously, treacherously, wickedly 'and wilfully, by certain thumpings, knockings, 'scratchings, and flutterings, against doors, walls, 'wainscots, bedsteads, and bed-posts, disturb, 'annoy, assault, and terrify divers innocent, in-'offensive, harmless, quiet, simple people, re-'siding in, at, near, or about the said Cock-lane, 'and elsewhere, in the said county of Middlesex, 'to the great prejudice of said people in said 'county. How say you? Guilty or——

Coun. [*Stops the Clerk short.*] May it please your worship—hem—I am counsel in this cause for the ghost—hem—and before I can permit her to plead, I have an objection to make, that is—hem—I shall object to her pleading at all.—Hem—It is the standing law of this country—hem—and has—hem—always been so allowed, deemed and practised, that—hem—all criminals should be tried *per pares*, by their equals—hem—that is—hem—by a jury of equal rank with themselves. Now, if this be the case, as the case it is, I—hem—I should be glad to know how my client can be tried in this here manner? And first, who is my client? She is in the indictment called a *phantom*, a *ghost*. What is a ghost? a spirit

What is a spirit? a spirit is a thing that exists independently of, and is superior to, flesh and blood. And can any man go for to think, that I can advise my client to submit to be tried by people of an inferior rank to herself? certainly no—I therefore humbly move to quash this indictment, unless a jury of ghosts be first had and obtained. [*Sits down.*

Ser. I am, in this cause, counsel against Fanny Phantom the ghost—eh—and notwithstanding the rule laid down by Mr Prosequi be—eh—right in the main, yet, here, it can't avail his client a whit. We allow—eh—we do allow, please your worship, that Fanny *quoad* Phantom—eh—had originally a right to a jury of ghosts; but—eh—if she did, by any act of her own, forfeit this right, her plea cannot be admitted. Now, we can prove to your worship, prove by a cloud of witnesses, that said Fanny did, as specified in the indictment, scratch, knock, and flutter—eh—which said scratchings, knockings, and flutterings—eh—being operations merely peculiar to flesh, blood, and body—eh—we do humbly apprehend—eh—that, by condescending to execute the aforesaid operations, she has waved her privilege as a ghost, and may be tried in the ordinary form, according to the statute so made and provided in the reign of, &c. &c. &c. Your worship's opinion?

Tire. Smoke the justice; he is as fast as a church.

Scam. I fancy he has touched the tankard too much this morning'; he'll know a good deal of what they have been saying.

Jus. [*Is waked by the Clerk, who tells him they have pleaded.*] Why the objection—oh—brought by Mr Prosequi, is [*Whispers the Clerk.*] doubtless provisionally a valid objection; but then, if the culprit has, by an act of her own, defeated her privilege, as asserted in Mr Serjeant's replication, we conceive she may be legally tried—oh—Besides—oh—Besides, I, I, I can't well see how we could impannel a jury of ghosts; or—oh—how twelve spirits, who have no body at all, can be said to take a corporal oath as required by law—unless, indeed, as in case of the peerage, the prisoner may be tried on their honour.

Coun. Your worship's distinction is just; knockings, scratchings, &c. as asserted by Mr Serjeant——

Ser. Asserted—Sir, do you doubt my instructions?

Coun. No interruptions, if you please, Mr Serjeant; I say as asserted; but can assertions be admitted as proofs? certainly no——

Ser. Our evidence is ready——

Coun. To that we object, to that we object, as it will anticipate the merits—your worship—

Ser. Your worship——

Jus. Why, as you impeach the ghost's privilege, you must produce proofs of her scratchings.

Ser. Call Shadrach Bodkin.

Clerk. Shadrach Bodkin, come into court.

Enter BODKIN.

Ser. Pray, Mr Bodkin where do you live?

Bod. I sojourn in Lukener's-lane.

Ser. What is your profession?

Bod. I am a teacher of the word, and a tailor.

Scam. Zounds, Will, it is a Methodist!

Tire. No sure!

Scam. By the lord Harry, it is!

Clerk. Silence.

Ser. Do you know any thing of Fanny the Phantom?

Bod. Yea—I do.

Ser. Can you give any account of her thumpings, scratchings, and flutterings?

Bod. Yea—manifold have been the scratchings and knockings, that I have heard.

Ser. Name the times.

Bod. I have attended the spirit Fanny, from the first day of her flutterings, even to the last scratch that she gave.

Ser. How long may that be?

Bod. Five weeks did she flutter, and six weeks did she scratch.

Scam. Six weeks—Damn it! I wonder she did not wear out her nails.

Clerk. Silence.

Ser. I hope the court is convinced?

Coun. Hold, Master Bodkin! you and I must have a little discourse. A tailor, you say? Do you work at your business?

Bod. No——

Coun. Look upon me, look upon the court—Then your present trade is your teaching?

Bod. It is no trade.

Coun. What is it then? a calling?

Bod. No, it is no calling—it is rather—as I may say—a forcing—a compelling——

Coun. By whom?

Bod. By the spirit that is within me——

Scam. It is an evil spirit, I believe; and needs must, when the devil drives, you know, Will.

Tire. Right, Harry——

Coun. When did you feel these spiritual motions?

Bod. In the town of Norwich, where I was born.—One day, as I was sitting cross-legged on my shop-board, new seating a cloth-pair of breeches of Mr Alderman Crape's—I felt the spirit within me, moving upwards and downwards, and this way and that way, and tumbling and jumbling——At first, I thought it was the cholic——

Coun. And how are you certain it was not?

Bod. At last I heard a voice whispering within me, crying, Shadrach, Shadrach, Shadrach! cast away the things that belong to thee, thy thimble and sheers, and do the things that I bid thee.

Coun. And you did?

Bod. Yea, verily.

Coun. I think I have heard a little of you, Master Bodkin: and so you quitted your business, your wife, and your children?

Bod. I did.

Coun. You did—But then you communed with other men's wives?

Bod. Yea, and with widows, and with maidens.

Coun. How came that about, Shadrach?

Bod. I was moved thereunto by the spirit.

Coun. I should rather think by the flesh——I have been told, friend Bodkin, that twelve became pregnant—

Bod. Thou art deceived—they were barely but nine.

Coun. Why, this was an active spirit.

Ser. But to the point, Mr Prosequi.

Coun. Well, then—you say you have heard those scratchings and knockings?

Bod. Yea——

Coun. But why did you think they came from a spirit?—

Bod. Because the very same thumps, scratches, and knocks, I have felt on my breast-bone from the spirit within me—

Coun. And these noises you are sure you heard on the first day of January?

Bod. Certain——

Ser. But to what do all those interrogatories tend?

Coun. To a most material purpose. Your worship observes, that Bodkin is positive as to the noises made on the first day of January by Fanny the Phantom: now, if we can prove an alibi, that is, that, on that very day, at that very time, the said Fanny was scratching and fluttering any where else, we apprehend that we destroy the credit of this witness——Call Peter Paragraph.

Clerk. Peter Paragraph, come into court.

Coun. This gentleman is an eminent printer, and has collected, for the public information, every particular relative to this remarkable story; but as he has the misfortune to have but one leg, your worship will indulge him in the use of a chair.

Clerk. Peter Paragraph, come into court.

Enter PARAGRAPH.

Coun. Pray, Mr Paragraph, where was you born?

Par. Sir, I am a native of Ireland, and born and bred in the city of Dublin.

Coun. When did you arrive in the city of London?

Par. About the last autumnal equinox; and now I recollect, my journal makes mention of my departure for England, in the Besborough packet, Friday, October the tenth, N. S. or new style.

Coun. Oh, then the journal is yours?

Par. Please your worship, it is; and relating thereto, I believe I can give you a pleasant conceit—Last week I went to visit a peer, for I know peers, and peers know me. Quoth his lordship to me, Mr Paragraph, with respect to your journal, I would wish that your paper was whiter, or your ink blacker. Quoth I to the peer, by way of reply, I hope you will own there is enough for the money? his lordship was pleased to laugh. It was such a pretty repartee, he, he, he, he!

Jus. Pray, Mr Paragraph, what might be your business in England?

Par. Hem—a little love-affair, please your worship.

Coun. A wife, I suppose——

Par. Something tending that way; even so long ago as January 1739-40, there past some amorous glances between us: she is daughter of old Vamp of the Turnstile; but, at that time, I stifled my passion, Mrs Paragraph being then in the land of the living.

Coun. She is now dead?

Par. Three years and three quarters, please your worship: we were exceeding happy together; she was, indeed, a little apt to be jealous.

Coun. No wonder——

Par. Yes: they can't help it, poor souls; but notwithstanding, at her death, I gave her a prodigious good character in my journal.

Coun. And how proceeds the present affair?

Par. Just now, we are quite at a stand——

Coun. How so?

Par. The old scoundrel, her father, has played me a slippery trick.

Coun. Indeed!

Par. As he could give no money in hand, I agreed to take her fortune in copies. I was to have the Wits *Vade Mecum* entire; four hundred of News from the Invisible World, in sheets; all that remained of Glanvil upon Witches; Hill's Bees, Bardana, Brewing, and Balsam of Honey, and three eights of Robinson Crusoe.

Coun. A pretty fortune!

Par. Yes; they are things that stir in the trade; but you must know that we agreed to go halves in Fanny the Phantom. But whilst I and two authors, whom I had hired to ask questions, at nine shillings a night, were taking notes of the knockings at the house of Mr Parsons himself, that old rascal Vamp had privately printed off a thousand eight-penny scratchings, purchased of two Methodist preachers, at the public-house over the way——

Coun. Now we come to the point—look upon this evidence; was he present at Mr Parsons' knockings?

Par. Never; this is one of the rascally Methodists——Hark'e, fellow? how could you be

such a scoundrel, to sell for genuine, your counterfeit scratchings to Vamp?

Bod. My scratchings were the true scratchings——

Par. Why, you lying son of a whore, did not I buy all my materials from the girl's father himself?

Bod. What the spirit commanded, that did I.

Par. What spirit?

Bod. The spirit within me——

Par. If I could but get at you, I would soon try what sort of a spirit it is—Stop, you villain! [*Exit* BODKIN.] The rogue has made his escape; but I will dog him to find out his haunts, and then return for a warrant—His scratchings! a scoundrel; I will have justice, or I'll turn his tabernacle into a pig-stye. [*Exit* PAR.

Coun. I hope, please your worship, we have sufficiently established our *alibi?*

Jus. You are unquestionably entitled to a jury of ghosts.

Coun. Mr Serjeant, you will provide us a list?

Ser. Let us see—you have no objection to sir George Villars, the evil genius of Brutus, the ghost of Banquo, Mrs Veal?

Coun. We object to a woman——your worship——

Jus. Why, it is not the practice; this, it must be owned, is an extraordinary case. But, however, if, on conviction, the Phantom should plead pregnancy, Mrs Veal will be admitted on the jury of matrons.

Ser. I thank your worship: then, the court is adjourned.

[TERENCE *and* DERMOT *in an upper box.*

Ter. By my shoul, but I will spake!

Der. Arrah, be quiet, Terence.

Ter. Dibble burn me, but I will; hut, hut, not spake! what should ail me? Harkee, you Mr Justice——

Scam. Hollo, what's the matter now, Will?

Der. Leave off, honey Terence, now you are well——

Ter. Dermot, be easy——

Scam. Hear him!

Tire. Hear him!

Ter. Ay, hear him, hear him! why the matter is this, Mr Justice: that little hopping fellow there, that Dublin journal man, is as great a liar as ever was born———

Tire. How so?

Ter. Ay, prithee don't bodder me! what d'ye learn no more manners at Oxford college, than to stop a jontleman in the midst of his speech before he begins? oh, for shame of yourself!—Why the matter is this, Mr Justice: That there, what the dibble d'ye call him, Pra-Praragraf;—but, by my shoul, that is none of his name neither; I know the little bastard as well as myself; as to Fanny the Phantom, long life to the poor jontlewoman; he knows no more of her, than the mother who bore her———

Suds. Indeed! good lord, you surprise me!

Ter. Arrah, now, honey Suds, spake when you are spoke to; you ar'n't upon the jury, my jewel, now; by my shoul, you are a little too fat for a ghost.

Tire. Prithee, friend Ephraim, let him go on: let us hear a little what he would be at——

Ter. I say, he knows nothing about the case that is litigated here, d'ye see, at all, at all; because why, I haunt ha' been from Dublin above four weeks, or a month, and I saw him in his shop every day; so that how could he be here and there, too? unless, indeed, he used to fly backwards and forwards, and that, you see, is impossible, because why he has got a wooden leg.

Scam. What the devil is the fellow about?

Tire. I smoke him—Harkee, Terence, who do you take that lame man to be?

Ter. Oh, my jewel, I know him well enough sure by his parson, for all he thought to conceal himself by changing his name———

Scam. Why, it is Foote, you fool!

Ter. Arrah, who?

Tire. Foote.

Ter. Fot, what the lecture-man, Pa———

Tire. Yes.

Ter. Arrah, be easy, honey——

Scam. Nay, inquire of Suds.

Suds. Truly I am minded 'twas he.

Ter. Your humble servant yourself, Mr Suds; by my shoul, I'll wager you three thirteens to a rap, that it is no such matter at all, at all.

Scam. Done—and be judged by the company.

Ter. Done—I'll ask the orator himself—here he comes.

Enter FOOTE.

Harkee, honey Fot, was it yourself that was happing about here but now?

Foote. I have heard your debate, and must give judgment against you———

Ter. What, yourself, yourself!

Foote. It was———

Ter. Then, faith, I have lost my thirteens—Arrah, but Fot, my jewel, why are you after playing such pranks, to bring an honest jontleman into company where he is nat——But what, is this selling of lectures a thriving profession?

Foote. I can't determine as yet; the public have been very indulgent; I have not long opened.

Ter. By my shoul, if it answers, will you be my pupil, and learn me the trade?

Foote. Willingly———

Ter. That's an honest fellow! long life to you, lad! [*Sits down.*

Foote. Having thus completed our lecture on the eloquence peculiar to the bar, we shall produce one great group of orators, in which

will be exhibited specimens of every branch of the art. You will have, at one view, the choleric, the placid, the voluble, the frigid, the frothy, the turgid, the calm, and the clamorous; and, as a proof of our exquisite skill, our subjects are not such as a regular education has prepared for the reception of this sublime science, but a set of illiterate mechanics, whom you are to suppose assembled at the Robin-Hood in the Butcher-row, in order to discuss and adjust the various systems of Europe, but particularly to determine the separate interest of their own mother country.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Robin-Hood.*

THE PRESIDENT; DERMOT O'DROGHEDA, *a chairman;* TOM TWIST, *a tailor;* STRAP, *a shoemaker;* ANVIL, *a smith;* SAM SLAUGHTER, *a butcher;* CATCHPOLE, *a bailiff*———*All with pewter pots before them.*

Pre. SILENCE, gentlemen! are your pots replenished with porter?

All. Full, Mr President.

Pre. We will then, proceed to the business of the day; and let me beg, gentlemen, that you will, in your debates, preserve that decency and decorum that is due to the importance of your deliberations, and the dignity of this illustrious assembly———

[*Gets up, pulls off his hat, and reads the motion.*

'Motion made last Monday, to be debated to-'day, That, for the future, instead of that vulgar 'potation called *porter*, the honourable members 'may be supplied with a proper quantity of Irish 'usquebaugh.

'DERMOT O'DROGHEDA † his mark.'

O'Dro. [*Gets up.*] That's I myself!

Pre. Mr O'Drogheda.

O'Dro. Mr President, the case is this. It is not becase I am any great lover of that same usquebaugh, that I have set my mark to the motion; but because I did not think it was decent for a number of jontlemen that were, d'ye see, met to settle the affairs of the nation, to be guzzling a pot of porter. To be sure, the liquor is a pretty sort of liquor enough, when a man is hot with trotting between a couple of poles; but this is another guess matter, because why, the head is concerned; and if it was not for the malt and the haps, dibble burn me but I would as soon take a drink from the Thames, as your porter. But as to usquebaugh; ah, long life to the liquor! —it is an exhilirator of the bowels, and a stomatic to the head; I say, Mr President, it invigorates, it stimulates, it—in short, it is the onliest liquor of life, and no man alive will die whilst he drinks it.

[*Sits down.* TWIST *gets up, having a piece of paper, containing the heads of what he says, in his hat.*]

Pre. Mr Timothy Twist.

Twist. Mr President, I second Mr O'Drogheda's motion; and, sir, give me leave—I say, Mr President [*Looks in his hat.*], give me leave to observe, that, sir, though it is impossible to add any force to what has been advanced by my honourable friend in the straps; yet, sir, [*Looks into his hat again.*] it may, sir, I say, be necessary to obviate some objections that may be made to the motion. And first, it may be thought ———I say, sir, some gentlemen may think, that this may prove pernicious to our manufacture—[*Looks in his hat.*]—and the duty, doubtless, it is of every member of this illustrious assembly to have a particular eye unto that; but, Mr President—sir—[*Looks in his hat, is confused, and sits down.*]

Pre. Mr Twist, O pray finish, Mr Twist!

Twist. [*Gets up.*] I say, Mr President, that, sir, if sir, it be considered that—as—I say—[*Looks in his hat.*] I have nothing farther to say. [*Sits down, and* STRAP *gets up.*]

Pre. Mr Strap.

Strap. Mr President, it was not my intention to trouble the assembly upon this occasion; but when I hear insinuations thrown out by gentlemen, where the interest of this country is so deeply concerned, I own I cannot sit silent; and give me leave to say, sir, there never came before this assembly a point of more importance than this; it strikes, sir, at the very root, sir, of your constitution: for, sir, what does this motion imply? It implies that porter, a wholesome, domestic manufacture, is to be prohibited at once. And for what, sir? for a foreign pernicious commodity. I had, sir, formerly the honour, in conjunction with my learned friend in the leather apron, to expel sherbet from amongst us, as I looked upon lemons as a fatal and foreign fruit —and can it be thought, sir, that I will sit silent to this? No, sir, I will put my shoulders strongly against it; I will oppose it *manibus totibus.* For should this proposal prevail, it will not end here: fatal, give me leave to say, will, I foresee, be the issue; and I sha'nt be surprised in a few days, to hear from the same quarter, a motion for the expulsion of gin, and a premium for the importation of whisky.

[*A hum of approbation, with significant nods and winks from the other members. He sits down, and* ANVIL *and another men-*

ber get up together; some cry ANVIL, *others* JACOB.

Pre. Mr Anvil.

Anvil. Mr President, sir——

[*The members all blow their noses, and cough;* ANVIL *talks all the while, but is not heard.*

Pre. Silence, gentlemen; pray, gentlemen! A worthy member is up.

Anvil. I say, Mr President, that if we consider this case in its utmost extent—[*All the members cough, and blow their noses again.*] I say, sir, I will. Nay, I insist on being heard. If any gentleman has any thing to say any where else, I'll hear him.

[*Members all laugh:* ANVIL *sits down in a passion, and* SLAUGHTER *gets up.*

Pre. Mr Samuel Slaughter.

Slaugh. Sir, I declare it, at the bare hearing of this here motion, I am all over in a sweat. For my part, I can't think what gentlemen mean by talking in that there manner; not but I likes that every man should deliver his mind; I does mine; it has been ever my way; and when a member opposes me, I like him the better for it; its right; I am pleased; he can't please me more; it is as it should be; and though I differ from the honourable gentleman in the flannel night-cap over the way, yet I am pleased to hear him say what he thinks; for, sir, as I said, it is always my rule to say what I think, right or wrong. [*A loud laugh.*] Ay, ay, gentlemen may laugh; with all my heart, I am used to it, I don't mind it a farthing: but, sir, with regard to that there motion, I entirely agree with my worthy friend with the pewter pot at his mouth. Now, sir, I would fain ask any gentleman this here question: Can any thing in nature be more natural for an Englishman than porter? I declare, Mr President, I think it the most wholesomest liquor in the world. But if it must be a change, let us change it for rum, a wholesome, palatable liquor, a liquor that —in short, Mr President, I don't know such a liquor. Ay, gentlemen may stare: I say, and I say it upon my conscience, I don't know such a liquor. Besides, I think there is in this here affair a point of law, which I shall leave to the consideration of the learned; and for that there reason, I shall take up no more of your time.

[*He sits down,* CATCHPOLE *gets up.*

Pre. Mr Catchpole.

Catch. I get up to the point of law. And though, sir, I am bred to the business, I can't say I am prepared for this question. But though this usquebaugh, as a dram, may not (by name) be subject to a duty, yet it is my opinion, or rather belief, it will be considered, as in the case of horses, to come under the article of dried goods. But I move, that another day this point be debated.

Slaugh. I second the motion.

[CATCHPOLE *gives a paper to the President, who reads it.*]

Pre. Hear your motion.

'That it be debated next Thursday, Whether 'the dram, usquebaugh, is subject to a particular 'duty; or, as the case of horses, to be consider-'ed under the article of dried goods?

All. Agreed, agreed!

Foote. And now, ladies and gentlemen, having produced to you glaring proofs of our great ability in every species of oratory; having manifested, in the persons of our pupils, our infinite address in conveying our knowledge to others, we shall close our morning's lecture, instituted for the public good, with a proposal for the particular improvement of individuals. We are ready to give private instructions to any reverend gentleman, in his probationary sermon for a lectureship; to young barristers, who have causes to open, or motions to make; to all condidates for the sock or buskin; or to the new members of any of those oratorical societies, with which this metropolis is at present so plentifully stocked.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

DEUCE IS IN HIM.

BY

COLMAN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
COL. TAMPER, *attached to* EMILY.	EMILY, *attached to* COL. TAMPER.
PRATTLE, *a tattling physician.*	BELL, *her sister.*
MAJOR BELFORD, *attached to* MADEMOISELLE FLORIVAL.	MADEMOISELLE FLORIVAL, *attached to* BELFORD.

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A room in* EMILY'S *house.*

Enter EMILY, *with a letter open in her hand; and* MADEMOISELLE FLORIVAL *in man's clothes.*

Emily. BE assured, that I will do every thing in my power to serve you; my brother knew that he might command my service—Be comforted, I beseech you, madam,

Flo. You cannot wonder, madam, that I should be shocked, extremely shocked, at the cruel necessity of appearing before you in so indelicate a disguise.

Emily. Indeed you need not: there is something in your manner, which convinces me, that every action of your life carries its apology along with it; though I will not venture to inquire into the particulars of your story till your mind is more at ease.

Flo. Alas, madam, it is my interest to make you acquainted with my story. I am the daughter of Monsieur Florival, a French physician, in the island of Belleisle. An English officer, who had been desperately wounded, was, after the capitulation, for the sake of due attendance, taken into my father's house; and, as I, in the very early part of my life, had resided in England, he took some pleasure in my conversation. In a word, he won my affections, and asked me of my father in marriage: but he, alas! too much influenced by the narrow prejudices so common between the two nations, forbade the officer his house, but not before we were, by the most solemn engagements, secretly contracted to each other.

Emily. May I ask the officer's name?

Flo. Excuse me, madam. Till I see or hear from him once more, my prudence, vanity, or call it what you will, will scarce suffer me to mention it. Your brother, indeed, is acquainted with——

Emily. I beg your pardon——I hope, however, you have no reason to think yourself neglected or forgotten?

Flo. Oh no; far from it. He was soon recalled by orders from England; and on my father's pressing me to consent to another match, my passion——I blush to own it——transported me so far, as to depart abruptly from Belleisle. I

came over in an English ship to Portsmouth, where I expected, according to letters he had contrived to send me, to find the officer. But, judge of my disappointment, when I learnt, that he embarked, but three days before, for the siege of the Havannah.

Emily. The Havannah!—You touch me nearly—Pray, go on.

Flo. In a strange kingdom—alone—and a woman—what could I do? In order to defeat inquiries after me, I disguised myself in this habit, and mixt with the officers of the place; but your brother soon discovered my uneasiness, and saw through my disguise. I frankly confessed to him every particular of my story: in consequence of which, he has thus generously recommended me to your protection.

Emily. And you may depend on my friendship. ——Your situation affects me strangely.

Flo. Oh, madam, it is impossible to tell you half its miseries; especially since your brother has convinced me that I am so liable to be discovered.

Emily. You shall throw off that dress as soon as possible, and then I will take you into the house with me and my sister——In the mean time, let me see you every day——every hour. I shall not be afraid that your visits will affect my reputation.

Flo. You are too good to me. [*Weeping.*

Emily. Nay, this is too much; it overcomes me. Pray, be cheerful.

Flo. I humbly take my leave.

Emily. Adieu, I shall expect you to dinner.

Flo. I shall do myself the honour of waiting on you. [*Exit* FLO.

Emily. Poor woman! I thought my own uneasiness almost insupportable; and yet, how much must her anxiety exceed mine!

Enter BELL.

Bell. So, sister! I met your fine gentleman. Upon my word, the young spark must be a favourite.—You have had a *tête-à-tête* of above half an hour together.

Emily. How d'ye like him?

Bell. Not at all: a soft lady-like gentleman, with a white hand, a mincing step, and a smooth chin. Where does this pretty master come from?

Emily. From my brother.

Bell. Who is he?

Emily. A present to you.

Bell. A present to me! what d'ye mean?

Emily. Why, did not my brother promise to take care of you, before he went abroad?

Bell. Well, and what then?

Emily. What then! Why, he has taken care of you—sent you a pretty fellow for a husband. Could he possibly take better care of you?

Bell. A husband!—a puppet, a doll, a—

Emily. A soldier, Bell!—a red coat, consider.

Bell. A fine soldier, indeed!—I can't bear to see a red coat cover any thing but a man, sister.—Give me a soldier that looks as if he could love me, and protect me; ay, and tame me, too, if I deserved it.—If I was to have this thing for a husband, I would set him at the top of the India cabinet with the China figures, and bid the maid take care she did not break him.

Emily. Well, well; if this is the case, I don't know what my brother will say to you. Here's his letter; read it, and send him an answer yourself.

Bell. [*Reads.*] 'Dear sister, the bearer of this letter is a lady!'—So, so! your servant, madam! and your's, too, sister!—'whose case is truly 'compassionate, and whom I most earnestly re-'commend to your protection,'—Um—um—um—'take care of her,'—Um—um—um—'not too 'many questions;'—Um—um—um—'in town in 'a few days.'—I'll be whipt now, if this is not some mistress of his?

Emily. No, no, Bell. I know her whole history It is quite a little novel. She is a Frenchwoman, Mademoiselle Florival, run away from her father at Belleisle, and dying for an English gentleman at the Havannah.

Bell. The Havannah!——Not for colonel Tamper, I hope, sister?

Emily. If colonel Tamper had been at the taking of Belleisle, too, I should have been frightened out of my wits about it.

Bell. Suppose I should bring you some news of him?

Emily. Of whom?

Bell. Colonel Tamper.

Emily. What do you mean?

Bell. Only a card.

Emily. A card! from whom? What card?

Bell. Oh, what a delightful flutter it puts her into!

Emily. Nay, but tell me.

Bell. Well then—while your visitor was here, there came a card from major Belford; and I took the liberty of sending an answer to it.

Emily. Let me see it! Dear Bell, let me see it!

Bell. Oh, it was nothing but his compliments, and desiring to have the honour of waiting on you any time this morning from colonel Tamper.

Emily. From colonel Tamper!—What can this mean? I am ready to sink with fear—Why does he not come himself?

Bell. He's not arrived—not come to town yet, I suppose.

Emily. Oh, Bell! I could suppose twenty things that terrify me to death.

Bell. I think now, such a message ought to put you quite out of your pain: he could not come from colonel Tamper, if there was no such person in being.

Emily. Ay; but suppose any accident should have happened to him! Heaven forbid! How

unfortunate it is to doat upon a man, whose profession exposes him hourly to the risk of his life!

Bell. Lord, Emily, how can you torment yourself with such horrid imaginations? Besides, should the worst come to the worst—it is but a lover lost; and that is a loss easily repaired, you know.

Emily. Go, you mad-cap! but you'll pay for all this one day, I warrant you, when you come to be heartily in for it yourself. Bell, you will know, that when a pure and disinterested passion fills the breast, when once a woman has set her heart upon a man, nothing in the world but that very man will ever make her happy.

Bell. I admire your setting your heart, as you call it, of all things. Your love, my dear Emily, is not so romantic. You pitch upon a man of figure and fortune, handsome, sensible, good-natured, and well-bred; of rank in life, and credit in his profession; a man that half the women in town would pull caps for; and then you talk, like a sly prude, of your pure and disinterested passion!

Emily. Why, then, I declare, if he had not a friend on earth, or a shilling in the world——— if he was as miserable as the utmost malice of ill fortune could make him, I would prefer colonel Tamper to the first duke in the kingdom.

Bell. Oh, sister, it is a mighty easy thing for persons rolling in affluence, and a coach and six, to talk of living on bread and water, and the comforts of love in a cottage.

Emily. The coach-and-six, Bell, would give little happiness to those who could not be happy without it. When once the heart has settled its affections, how mean is it to withdraw them for any paltry considerations, of what nature soever!

Bell. I think the lady doth protest too much.

Emily. Ay, but she'll keep her word.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Major Belford, madam. [*Exit.*

Emily. Show him in—Oh, Bell, I am ready to drop with apprehension!

Enter MAJOR BELFORD.

Belf. Ladies, your humble servant—[*Salutes them.*]—I rejoice to find you so well.

Bell. And we congratulate you, major, on your safe return from the Havannah—how does your friend colonel Tamper do?

Belf. He is very well, madam; but——

Emily. But what, sir—I am frighted beyond expression—Is he in England?

Belf. Yes, madam.

Emily. In town?

Belf. Yes, madam.

Emily. Why have not we the pleasure of seeing him, then?

Belf. He'll be here immediately, madam.

Emily. Oh, well?

Belf. But it was thought proper that I should wait on you first, to prepare you for his reception.

Emily. To prepare me! What does he mean?

Belf. Only to prevent your being alarmed at his appearance, madam.

Emily. Alarmed! You terrify me more and more—what is the matter?

Belf. Nay, nothing—a trifle—the mere chance of war—*la fortune de la guerre*, as the French call it; that's all, madam.

Emily. I'm upon the rack——Dear sir, explain———

Belf. The colonel, you know, madam, is a man of spirit—Having exposed his person very gallantly in the several actions before the town of the Havannah, he received many wounds; one or two of which have been attended with rather disagreeable circumstances.

Emily. But is the colonel well at present, sir?

Belf. Extremely well, madam.

Emily. Are not the consequences of his wounds likely to endanger his life?

Belf. Not in the least, madam.

Emily. I am satisfied—Pray go on, sir.

Belf. Do not you be alarmed, madam.

Emily. Keep me no longer in suspence, I beseech you, sir!

Bell. What can all this mean?

Belf. The two principal wounds which the colonel received, madam, were, one a little above the knee, and another in his face. In consequence of the first, he was reduced to the necessity of saving his life by the loss of a leg; and the latter has deprived him of the sight of an eye.

Emily. Oh, Heavens! [*Ready to faint.*

Bell. Poor Emily! How could you be so abrupt, sir? The violent agitation of her mind is too much for her spirits.

Belf. Excuse me, madam——I was afraid of making you uneasy; and yet it was necessary you should be acquainted with these circumstances, previous to your seeing the colonel.

Emily. [*Recovering.*]—Lost a leg and an arm, did you say, sir?

Belf. No, not an arm—an eye, madam.

Emily. An eye! worse and worse——Poor colonel!

Belf. Rather unfortunate, to be sure. But we should consider, madam, that we have saved his life; and these were sacrifices necessary for its preservation.

Emily. Very true. Ay, ay, so as he has but his life, I am happy. And I ought now to be attached to him, not only from tenderness, but compassion.

Belf. After all, madam, his appearance is much better than you may imagine. His face, by the help of a black ribband, is very little dis-

figured; and he has got a false leg, made so naturally, that, except a small hitch in his gait, there is no material alteration in his person and deportment—Besides which, in point of health and spirits, he is particularly well.

Emily. I am glad of it. But, alas! he, whose person was so charming! And then his eyes, that were so brilliant! So full of sensibility!

Bell. This accident, madam, on his own account, gives him no uneasiness; to say the truth, he seems rather vain upon it: I could wish, therefore, when he comes, that you would not seem too deeply affected, but rather assume an air of chearfulness, lest any visible uneasiness in you should shock the colonel.

Emily. Poor colonel! I know his sensibility. Let me endeavour, therefore, to convince him, that he is as dear to me as ever! Oh, yes, cost me what it will, I must show him, that the preservation of his life is an entire consolation to me.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Colonel Tamper, madam.

Emily. Eh? What? [*Disordered.*

Bell. Desire the colonel to walk up—compose yourself, my dear; poor Emily! I am in pain for her. [*Aside.*

Enter COLONEL TAMPER—*Runs up to* EMILY.

Tam. My dearest Emily! How happy am I to see you once again! I have brought back the honest heart and hand which I devoted to you: as to the rest of my body, you see I did not care sixpence what became of it. Miss Bell, I rejoice to see you so well——Major, I am yours—But, my Emily——

Emily. Oh, colonel!

[*Bursts into tears, and leans upon* BELL.

Tam. How's this? Tears!

Bell. You should not have followed the major so soon, colonel; she had scarce recovered the first shock from his intelligence.

Tam. My impatience would suffer me to delay no longer—Why do you weep so, Emily? Are you sorry to see me again?

Emily. Sorry to see you unfortunate.

[*Weeping.*

Tam. Unfortunate! call me rather fortunate; I am come back alive; alive and merry, Emily.

Emily. I am glad you have saved your life.

[*Weeping.*

Tam. I dare say you are. Look on me, then. What, not one glance! Won't you deign to look on your poor maimed soldier?—[*Pausing.*]—Is it possible, then, that any little alteration of my person can occasion a change in your sentiments?

Emily. Never, colonel, never! it is surely no mark of want of affection to be so much hurt at your misfortunes.

Tam. Misfortunes! No misfortunes at all—none at all to a soldier—nothing but the ordinary incidents and common casualties of his life——marks of honour—and tokens of valour—I declare I bear them about with me as the most honourable badges of my profession———I am proud of them——I would not part with this wooden leg for the best flesh and blood in Christendom.

Emily. And can you really be so unconcerned at this accident?

Tam. Really; and you shall be unconcerned, too, Emily. You shall find more in me still, than in half the battered rakes and fops about town. It injures me no more than it does a fine tree, to lop my branches. My trunk is heart of oak, and I shall thrive the better for it.

Emily. But is there no hope of recovering your eye again? Oh, we must have the best advice—Is the sight quite lost?

Tam. Quite; blind as a mill-horse—blind as a beetle, Emily——But what does that signify? Love is blind, you know; and if I have lost one eye, why, they say, I shall see the clearer with the other.

Emily. I cannot look at him without shuddering. [*Retires, and sits down.*

Bell. What action was it you suffered in, colonel?

Tam. Before the Moro Castle, madam, before the Moro—hot work, hissing hot, by sea and land, I assure you, madam. Ah, the Moro, the Moro! But if men go to run their heads against stone-walls, they must expect to have a sconce or two broken, before they make their way through them—Eh, major?

Bell. Major Belford was with you?

Tam. All the while. The major and I fought side by side, cheek by jowl, till I fell, madam! We paid the Dons—didn't we, major? But Velasco, poor Velasco! A fine brave Don, must be owned—I had rather have died like Velasco, than have lived to be generalissimo.

Bell. [*To* EMILY.]—How are you, sister?

Tam. Nay, prithee, Emily, be comforted! More than all this might have happened to me at home. I might have thrown away my life in a duel, or broke my neck in a fox-chace: a fit of the gout, or an apoplexy, might have maimed me ten times worse for ever; or a palsy, perhaps, have killed one half of me at a single stroke—You must not take on thus—If you do, I shall be extremely uneasy.

Emily. Excuse me; I cannot help it—but, be assured, I esteem you as much as ever, sir.

Tam. Esteem, and sir! This is cold language; I have not been used to hear you talk in that style, Emily.

Emily. I don't know what I say—I am not well—let me retire.

Tam. When shall we name the happy day? I shall make shift to dance on that occasion——though as Withrington fought——on my stumps, Emily. Tell me, when shall we be happy?

Emily. I grow more and more faint—lead me to my chamber, Bell.

Bell. She is very ill——don't tease her now, colonel; but let us try to procure her some repose.

Tam. Ay, ay, a short sleep and a little reflection, and all will be well, I dare say; I will be here again soon, and administer consolation, I warrant you. Adieu, my dear Emily!

Emily. Adieu! Oh, Bell!

[*Exit in tears with* BELL.

Tam. [*Assuming his natural air and manner.*] —Ha, ha, ha! Well, Belford, what is your opinion, now? Will she stand the test or no?

Belf. If she does, it is more than you deserve. I could wish she would give you up, with all my heart, if I did not think you would run stark mad with vexation.

Tam. Why so?

Belf. Because, as I have often told you before, this is a most absurd and ridiculous scheme, a mere trick to impose upon yourself, and, most probably, end in your losing the affections of an amiable lady.

Tam. You know, Belford, there is an excess of sensibility in my temper———

Belf. That will always make you unhappy.

Tam. Rather say it will ensure the future happiness of my life. Before I bind myself to abide by a woman at all events, and in all circumstances, I must be assured that she will, at all events, and in all circumstances, retain her affection for me.

Belf. 'Sdeath, I have no patience to hear you. Have not you all the reason in the world to rest assured, that Emily entertains a most sincere passion for you?

Tam. Perhaps so; but then I am not equally assured of the basis on which that passion is founded.

Belf. Her folly, I am afraid.

Tam. Nay, but I am serious, major.

Belf. You are very ridiculous, colonel.

Tam. Well, well; it does not signify talking: I must be convinced that she loves me for my own sake, for myself alone; and that, were I divested of every desirable gift of fortune and of nature, and she was to be addressed by fifty others, who possessed them all in the most eminent degree, she would continue to prefer me to all the rest of mankind.

Belf. Most precious refinement, truly! This is the most high-flown metaphysics in sentiment I ever heard in my life! picked up in one of your expeditions to the coast of France, I suppose—No plain Englishman ever dreamed of such a whim—Love you for yourself! for your own sake! not she, truly.

Tam. How then?

Belf. Why for her own, to be sure——and so would any body else. I am your friend, and love you as your friend: and why? because I am glad to have commerce with a man of talents, honour, and honesty. Let me once see you behave like a poltroon or a villain, and you know I would cut your throat, colonel!

Tam. I don't doubt you, major; but if she don't love me for my own sake, for myself, as I said, how can I ever be certain that she will not transfer that love to another?

Belf. For your own sake! for yourself again! why, what, in the name of common sense, is this self of yours, that you make such a rout about? Your birth, your fortune, your character, your talents, and, perhaps, sweet colonel, that sweet person of yours—all these may have taken her—and habitude, and continual intercourse, must increase her partiality for them in you, more than in any other person. But, after all, none of these things are yourself. You are but the ground; and these qualities are woven into your frame. Yet it is not the stuff, but the richness of the work, that stamps a value on the piece.

Tam. Why, this is downright sermonizing, major. Give you pudding-sleeves, and a grizzle-wig, you might be chaplain to the regiment. Yet matrimony is a leap in the dark, indeed, if we cannot before-hand make ourselves at all certain of the fidelity and affection of our wives.

Belf. Marriage is precarious, I grant you, and must be so. You may play like a wary gamester, 'tis true. I would not marry a notorious profligate, nor a woman in a consumption: but there is no more answering for the continuance of her good disposition, than that of her good health.

Tam. Fine maxims! make use of them yourself: they won't serve me. A fine time, indeed, to experience a woman's fidelity—after marriage! a time when every thing conspires to render it her interest to deceive you! No, no; no fool's paradise for me, Belford!

Bel. A fool's paradise is better than a wiseacre's purgatory.

Tam. 'Sdeath, Belford! who comes here?—I shall be discovered!

[*Resuming his counterfeit manner.*

Enter PRATTLE.

Pra. Gentlemen, your most obedient; mighty sorry, extremely concerned, to hear the lady's taken ill——I was sent for in a violent hurry—had forty patients to visit—resolved to see her, however——Major Belford, I rejoice to see you in good health—Have I the honour of knowing this gentleman?

[*Pointing to* TAMPER, *and going up to him.*

Tam. Hum, hum!

[*Limping away from* PRATTLE, *and putting his handkerchief to his face.*

Bel. An acquaintance of mine, Mr Prattle—You don't know him, I believe——A little hurt in the service—that's all.

Prat. Accidents, accidents will happen—No less than seven brought into our infirmary yes-

terday, and ten into the hospital———Did you hear, Major Belford, that poor lady Di. Racket broke her arm last night, by an overturn, from her horses taking fright among the vast croud of coaches getting in at lady Thunder's rout; and yesterday morning, Sir Helter Skelter, who is so remarkably fond of driving, put out his collar-bone by a fall from his own coach-box?

Tam. Pox on his chattering! I wish he'd be gone! [*Apart to* BELFORD.

Bel. But your fair patient, Mr Prattle——— I am afraid we detain you.

Prat. Not at all;———I'll attend her immediately——[*Going, returns.*]——You have not heard of the change in the ministry?

Tam. Psha!

Bel. I have.

Prat. Well, well———[*Going, returns.*]—— Lady Sarah Melville brought to bed, within these two hours———a boy———Gentlemen, your servant; your very humble servant. [*Exit.*

Tam. Chattering jacknapes!

Bel. So, the apothecary's come already——— we shall have a consultation of physicians, the knocker tied up, and straw laid in the street shortly.———But are not you ashamed, Tamper, to give her all this uneasiness?

Tam. No matter———I'll make her ample amends at last———What could possess them to send for this blockhead? He'll make her worse and worse——He will absolutely talk her to death.

Bel. Oh, the puppy's in fashion, you know.

Tam. It is lucky enough the fellow did not know me. He's a downright he-gossip!—and any thing he knows might as well be published in The Daily Advertiser. But come, for fear of discovery, we had better decamp for the present. March!

Bel. You'll expose yourself confoundedly, Tamper.

Tam. Say no more. I'm resolved to put her affection to the trial. If she's thorough proof, I'm made for ever. Come along! [*Going.*

Bel. Tamper!

Tam. Oh! I am lame—I forgot. [*Limping.*

Bel. Lord, Lord! what a fool self-love makes of a man! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—EMILY's *dressing-room.*

EMILY, BELL, PRATTLE, *sitting on a sofa.*

Bell. I THINK you seem to be a good deal recovered, Emily.

Emily. I am much better than I was, I thank you———Heigh-ho!

Prat. Ay, ay, I knew we should be better by and by——These little nervous disorders are very common all over the town—merely owing to the damp weather, which relaxes the tone of the whole system.—The poor duchess of Porcelain has had a fever on her spirits these three weeks—Lady Teaser's case is absolutely hysterical; and lady Betty Dawdle is almost half mad with lowness of spirits, headaches, tremblings, vain fears, and wanderings of the mind.

Emily. Pray, Mr Prattle, how does poor Miss Compton do?

Prat. Never better, ma'am.—Somebody has removed her disorder, by prescribing very effectually, to the marquis of Cranford. His intended match with Miss Richman, the hundred thousand pound fortune, is quite off; and so, ma'am, Miss Compton is perfectly well again——By the bye too, she has another reason to rejoice; for her cousin, Miss Dorothy, who lives with her, and began, you know, to grow rather old-maidish, as we say, ma'am, made a sudden conquest of Mr Bumper, a Lancashire gentleman of a great estate, who came up to town for the Christmas; and they were married at Miss Compton's yesterday evening.

Bell. Is it true, Mr Prattle, that sir John Medley is going to the south of France, for the recovery of his health?

Prat. Very true, ma'am, very true, that he's going, I promise you: but not for the recovery of his health. Sir John's well enough himself—but his affairs are in a galloping consumption, I assure you. No less than two executions in his house. I heard it for fact, at lady Modish's. Poor gentleman, I have known his chariot stand at Arthur's till eight o'clock in the morning. He has had a sad run a long time; but that last affair at Newmarket totally undid him.———Pray, ladies, have you heard the story of Alderman Manchester's lady?

Bell. Oh, no. Pray what is it?

Prat. A terrible story indeed!—Eloped from her husband, and went off with lord John Sprightly. Their intention, it seems, was to go over to Holland; but the alderman pursued them to Harwich, and catched them just as they were going to embark. He threatened lord John with a prosecution: but lord John, who knew the alderman's turn, came down with a thousand pounds; and so the alderman received his wife, and all is well again.

Bell. I vow, Mr Prattle, you are extremely amusing. You know the chit-chat of the whole town.

Prat. Can't avoid picking up a few slight anecdotes, to be sure, ma'am—Go into the best houses in town—attend the first families in the kingdom———nobody better received———nobody takes more care—nobody tries to give more satisfaction.

Bell. Is there any public news of any kind, Mr Prattle?

Prat. None at all, ma'am———except that the officers are most of them returned from the Havannah.

Emily. So we hear, sir.

Prat. I saw colonel Tamper yesterday. O, ay! and major Belford, and another gentleman, as I came in here this morning.

Bell. That was colonel Tamper, sir.

Prat. That gentleman, colonel Tamper, ma'am?

Bell. Yes, sir.

Prat. Pardon me, ma'am, I know colonel Tamper very well.—That poor gentleman was somewhat disabled—had suffered a little in the wars—colonel Tamper is not so unfortunate.

Emily. O yes, that horrid accident!

Prat. What accident?

Bell. His wounds—his wounds——Don't you know, sir?

Prat. Wounds, ma'am!—Upon my word I never heard he had received any.

Bell. No! Why he lost a leg and an eye at the siege of the Havannah.

Prat. Did he? Why then, ma'am, I'll be bold to say, he is the luckiest man in the world.

Bell. Why so, sir?

Prat. Because, madam, if he lost a leg and an eye at the Havannah, they must be grown again, or he has somehow procured others that do the business every whit as well.

Emily. Impossible!

Prat. I wish I may die, madam, if the colonel had not yesterday two as good legs and fine eyes as any man in the world! If he lost one of each at the Havannah, we practitioners in physic should be much obliged to him to communicate his receipt for the benefit of Greenwich and Chelsea hospitals.

Emily. Are you sure, sir, that the colonel has had no such loss, sir?

Prat. As sure as that I am here, madam! I saw him going into the what-d'ye-call-him ambassador's, just over against my house, yesterday; and the last place I was at this morning, was Mrs Daylight's, where I heard the colonel was at her route last night, and that every body thought he was rather improved than injured by his late expedition.—But, odso! Lack-a-day, lack-a-day, lack-a-day!—now I recollect—ha, ha, ha!

[*Laughing very heartily.*

Bell. What's the matter, Mr Prattle?

Prat. Excuse me, ladies: I can't forbear laughing—ha, ha, ha!——The gentleman in t'other room, colonel Tamper! ha, ha, ha!——I find the colonel had a mind to pay a visit in masquerade this morning——I spoke to major Belford——I thought I knew his friend, too——but he limped away, and hid his face, and would not speak to me.——Upon my word, he did it very well! I could have sworn there had been an amputation—He would make a figure at a masked ball. Ha, ha, ha!

Emily. Bell. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Looking at each other, and affecting to laugh.*

Prat. Ha, ha, ha! very comical! Ha, ha, ha!

Bell. A frolic, Mr Prattle, a frolic! I think, however, you had better not take any notice of it abroad.

Prat. Me! I shall never breath it, madam: I am close as oak—an absolute free-mason for secrecy—But, madam, [*Rising.*] I must bid you good morning—I have several patients to visit before dinner.—Mrs Tremor, I know, will be dying with the vapours till she sees me; and I am to meet Dr Valerian at lord Hectic's in less than half an hour.

Emily. Ring the bell, my dear—Mr Prattle, your servant.

Prat. Ladies, your very humble servant.—I shall send you a cordial mixture, madam, to be taken in any particular faintness, or lowness of spirits; and some draughts for morning and evening. Have a care of catching cold, be cautious in your diet, and I make no doubt but in a few days we shall be perfectly recovered.——Ladies, your servant: Your most obedient, very humble servant. [*Exit.*

[*The ladies sit for some time silent.*

Bell. [*After a pause.*] Sister Emily!

Emily. Sister Bell!

Bell. What d'ye think of colonel Tamper now, sister?

Emily. Why, I am so provoked, and so pleased; so angry, and so diverted; that I don't know whether I should be in or out of humour, at this discovery.

Bell. No! Is it possible you can have so little spirit? This tattling apothecary will tell this fine story at every house he goes into——it will be town-talk—If a lover of mine had attempted to put such an impudent deceit upon me, I would never see his face again.

Emily. If you had a lover that you liked, Bell, you would not be quite so violent.

Bell. Indeed but I should. What! to come here with a Canterbury tale of a leg and an eye, and heaven knows what, merely to try the extent of his power over you!—To gratify his inordinate vanity, in case you should retain your affection for him; or to reproach you for your weakness and infidelity, if you could not reconcile yourself to him on that supposition!

Emily. It is abominably provoking, I own; and yet, Bell, it is not a quarter of an hour ago, but I would have parted with half my fortune to have made it certain that there was a trick in the story.

Bell. Well, I never knew one of these men of extraordinary sense, as they are called, that was not, in some instances, a greater fool than the rest of mankind.

Emily. After all, Bell, I must confess that this stratagem has convinced me of the infirmity of my temper. This supposed accident began to make strange work with me.

Bell. I saw that plain enough. I told you what your pure and disinterested passion, sister,

would come to, long ago.—Yet this is so flagrant an affront, I would make him smart for it some way or other; I would not marry him these seven years.

Emily. That, perhaps, might be punishing myself, sister.

Bell. We must plague him, and heartily too. Oh, for a bright thought now, some charming invention to torment him!

Emily. Oh, as to that matter, I should be glad to have some comical revenge on him with all my heart.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Captain Johnson, madam.

Emily. Desire him to walk up. [*Exit Ser.*] I am fit to see any company now.——This discovery will do me more good, I believe, than all Mr Prattle's cordial mixtures, as he calls them.

Bell. Oh, you're in charming spirits, sister—But captain Johnson! you abound in the military, captains, colonels, and majors, by wholesale: Who is captain Johnson, pray?

Emily. Only the name that Mademoiselle Florival, the Belleisle lady you saw this morning, goes by.

Bell. Oh, sister, the luckiest thought in the world—such an use to make of this lady.

Emily. What d'ye mean?

Bell. Captain Johnson shall be colonel Tamper's rival, sister!

Emily. Hush! here she is.

Enter MADEMOISELLE FLORIVAL.

Give me leave, madam, to introduce you to my sister.

Bell. I have heard your story, madam, and take part in your misfortunes.

Flo. I am infinitely obliged both to you, and to that lady, madam.

Emily. Oh! madam, I have been extremely ill since you was here this morning, and terrified almost beyond imagination.

Flo. I am very sorry to hear it; may I ask what has alarmed you?

Emily. It is so ridiculous, I scarce know how to tell you.

Bell. Then I will. You must know, madam, that my sister was engaged to an officer, who went out on a late military expedition. He is just returned, but is come home with the strangest conceit that ever filled the brain of a lover. He took it into his head to try my sister's faith, by pretending to be maimed and wounded, and has actually visited her this morning in a counterfeit character. We have just now detected the imposition, and want your assistance to be pleasantly revenged on him.

Flo. I cannot bring myself to be an advocate for the lady's cruelty—But you may both command me in any thing.

Emily. There is no cruelty in the case; I fear I am gone too far for that. As you are, in appearance, such a smart young gentleman, my sister has waggishly proposed to make you the instrument of exciting colonel Tamper's jealousy, by your personating the character of a supposed rival. Was not that your device, sister?

Bell. It was; and if this lady will come into it, and you play your part well, we'll tease the wise colonel, and make him sick of his rogueries, I warrant you.

Flo. I have been a mad girl in my time, I confess, and remember when I should have joined in such a frolic with pleasure. At present, I fear I am scarce mistress enough of my temper to maintain my character with any tolerable humour. However, I will summon up all my spirits, and do my best to oblige you.

Bell. Oh, you will have but little to do. The business will lie chiefly on your hands, Emily—You must be most intolerably provoking. If you do but irritate him sufficiently, we shall have charming sport with him.

Emily. Never fear me, Bell; Mr Prattle's intelligence has given me spirits equal to any thing. Now I know it is but a trick, I shall scarce be able to see him limping about without laughing.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Colonel Tamper, madam.

Emily. Show him in. [*Exit Servant.*] Now, ladies!

Bell. Now, sister! Work him heartily; cut him to the bone, I charge you. If you shew him the least mercy, you are no woman.

Enter COLONEL TAMPER.

Tam. This it is to have new servants! not at home, indeed! A pack of blockheads, to think of denying my Emily to me. I knew the poor dear soul was a little out of order indeed—but—[*Seeing* FLORIVAL.] I beg pardon, madam! I did not know you had company.

Bell. Oh, this gentleman is a particular friend of my sister's—he's let in at any time.

Tam. Hum! [*Disordered.*

Emily. I did not expect to see you return so soon, sir!

Tam. No—I believe I am come somewhat unexpectedly indeed, madam!

Emily. If your return had not been so extremely precipitate, sir, I should have sent you a message on purpose to prevent your giving yourself that trouble.

Tam. Madam! a message! for what reason?

Emily. Because I am otherwise engaged. [*With indifference.*

Tam. Engaged! I don't apprehend you, madam.

Emily. No? you are extremely dull, then:—

don't you see I have company? Was you at the opera last night, captain Johnson?

[*Coquetting with* FLORIVAL.

Tam. I am thunderstruck!——Madam! Miss Emily!—Madam!

Emily. Sir!—Colonel Tamper!—Sir!

Tam. I say, madam!——

Emily. Sir!

Tam. 'Sdeath, I have not power to speak to her!—This strange and sudden alteration in your behaviour, madam——

Emily. Alteration! none at all, sir: the change is on your side, not mine. I'll be judged by this gentleman. Captain Johnson, here's a miniature of the colonel, which he sat for just before he went abroad—done by a good hand, and reckoned a striking likeness. Did you ever see a poor creature so altered? [*Giving a bracelet.*

Flo. Why, really, madam, there is, I must own, a very visible difference at present. That black ribband [*Looking by turns on the picture and* COLONEL TAMPER.] makes a total eclipse of the brilliancy of this right eye—and then, the irregular motion of the leg gives such a twist to the rest of the body, that——

Tam. Sir!——But it is to you I address myself at present, madam. I was once fond and foolish enough to imagine that you had a heart truly generous and sensible; and flattered myself that it was above being shaken by absence, or affected by events. How have I been deceived! I find that——

Emily. Pardon me, sir; I never deceived you: nay, you see that I disdained the thought of deceiving you even for a day. Out of respect to our late mutual attachment, I am resolved to deal openly with you. In a word, then, every thing between us must now be at an end.

Tam. Confusion! Every thing at an end! and can you, can you, Emily, have the courage to tell me so?

Emily. Why not? Come, come, colonel Tamper, vanity is your blind side.

Tam. Zounds, madam!

Emily. Don't be in a passion. Do but consider the matter calmly; and though it may rather be displeasing, yet, when you have duly weighed all circumstances, I'm sure you must do me the justice to acknowledge my sincerity.

Tam. I shall run mad—Is it possible, Emily?—Sincerity do you call this?—Dissimulation—damned dissimulation!

Emily. Have patience, sir! The loss of your whole fortune would have been trifling to me; but how can I reconcile myself to this mangling of your figure? Let me turn the tables on you for a moment—Suppose now, colonel, that I had been so unfortunate as to have lost a leg and an eye, should you, d'ye think, have retained your affection inviolable for me?

Tam. False, false woman! Have a care, Emily! have a care, I say, or you'll destroy your fame and happiness for ever. Consider what you are doing, ere you make a final resolution—You'll repent your inconstancy, I tell you beforehand—upon my soul, you will—You'll have more reason to repent it, than you can possibly imagine.

Emily. Why will you oblige me now to say shocking things to you? It goes against me to tell you so; but I can't even see you now without horror; nay, was I even, from a vain point of honour, to adhere to my engagements with you, I could never conquer my disgust. It would be a most unnatural connection. Would not it, captain Johnson?

Tam. Hell! 'Sdeath! Confusion! How stendily she persists in her perfidy! Madam! Madam!—I shall choak with rage—But one word, and I am gone for ever—for ever, for ever, madam!

Emily. What would you say, sir?

Tam. Tell me then—and tell me truly: Have not you received the addresses of that gentleman?

Emily. He has honoured me with them, I confess, sir; and every circumstance is so much in his favour, that I could have no manner of objection to him, but my unfortunate engagements to you—But since your ill fortune has invincibly divorced us from each other, I think I am at liberty to listen to him.

Tam. Matchless confidence!—Mighty well, madam! It is not then the misfortunes that have befallen me, but the charms you have found in that gentleman, which have altered your inclination.

Flo. Well, sir! and what then, sir? The lady, I presume, is not included, like an old mansion-house, in the rent-roll of your estate, or the inventory of your goods and chattels? Her hand, I hope, is still her own property, and she may bestow it on you or me, or any body else, just as she pleases.

Tam. You are a villain, sir!—Withdraw!

Bell. Oh Heavens! here will be murder—Don't stir, I beg you, sir!

Flo. O, never fear me, madam; I am not such a poltroon as to contend with that gentleman—Do you think I would set my strength and skill against a poor blind man, and a cripple?

Tam. Follow me, sir! I'll soon teach you to use your own legs.

Flo. Oh, the sturdy beggar! stir your stumps and begone; here's nothing for you, fellow!

Tam. Villain!

Flo. Poor man!

Tam. Scoundrel!

Flo. Prithee, man, don't expose yourself.

Tam. Puppy!

Flo. Poor wretch!

Emily. What, quarrel before ladies! Oh, for shame, colonel!

Tam. This is beyond all sufferance. I can

contain no longer—Know, then, madam, [*To* EMILY.] to your utter confusion, I am not that mangled thing which you imagine me—You may see, madam——

[*Resuming his natural manner.*

Emily.
Bell. } Ha, ha, ha!
Flo.

[*Laughing violently.*

Emily. A wonderful cure of lameness and blindness! Your case is truly curious, sir; and attested by three credible witnesses—Will you give us leave to print it in the public papers?

Tam. Madam, madam!

Flo. I think the story would make a figure in the Philosophical Transactions.

Tam. Sir!

Bell. A pretty leg, indeed! Will you dance a a minuet with me, colonel?

Emily. Your wounds are not mortal, I hope, colonel?

Tam. No, madam! my person, I thank Heaven, is still unhurt. I have my legs, both legs, madam; and I will use them to transport me as far as possible from so false a woman—I have my eyes, too; my eyes, madam; but they shall never look on you again, but as the most faithless and ungrateful of your sex!

Emily. If I am not surprised how he could act it so well! Pray, let us see you do it again, colonel—How was it, eh? [*Mimicking.*] hip-hop, hip-hop, like prince Volscius, I think.

Tam. I took that method, madam, to try your truth, constancy, and affection. I have found you void of all those qualities, and I shall have reason to rejoice at the effect of my experiment as long as I live.

Emily. If you meant to separate yourself from me. And a mighty proof you have given of your own affection, truly! Instead of returning, after an anxious absence, with joy, into my presence, to come home with a low and mean suspicion, with a narrow jealousy of mind, when the frankness and generosity of my behaviour ought to have engaged you to repose the most unlimited confidence in me.

Tam. The event, madam, has but well warranted my experiment.

Emily. And shall justify it, sir, still more: for here, before your face, I give my hand to this gentleman; solemnly declaring, that it shall never be in your power to dissolve the connection formed between us.

Tam. As to you, madam, your infidelity be your punishment. But that gentleman shall hear from me.

Flo. I defy you, sir!

Emily. Nothing farther remains between us; leave me, sir!

Tam. I am gone, madam! and so help me, Heaven, never, never to return——

[*Going.*

Enter MAJOR BELFORD.

Belf. How! going in a passion? Hold, Tamper—All in confusion! I thought so—and came to set matters to rights again.

Flo. What do I see! Major Belford! Major Belford! oh! [*Faints.*

Belf. Ha, my name, and fainting? What can this mean? [*Runs and takes her in his arms.*]—By Heavens, a woman! May I hope that—— Hold, she recovers—It is, it is she! my dear Florival herself! and we shall still be happy.

Tam. Belford's Belleisle lady, as I live! My rival a woman! I begin to feel myself very ridiculous.

Belf. What wonder, my love, has brought you hither, and in this habit?

Flo. Oh, sir, I have a long story to relate. At present let it suffice to say, that that lady's brother has been the noblest of friends to me; and she herself, this morning, generously vouchsafed to take me under her protection.

Belf. I am bound to them for ever. At my return I found letters from your father, who, supposing you was in England with me, wrote to acquaint me that he was inconsolable for your loss, and that he would consent to our union if I would but assure him that you was safe and well. The next post shall acquaint him of our good fortune. Well, Tamper, am not I a lucky fellow?

Tam. Oh, Belford! I am the most miserable dog in the world!

Belf. What! you have dropped your mask, I see—you're on your own legs again; I met Prattle in the street—He stopt his chariot to speak to me about you, and I found that he had blown you up, and discovered to the ladies that you was returned, quite unhurt, from the Havannah.

Tam. Did that coxcomb betray me? That accounts for all Emily's behaviour—Oh, major, I am ruined past redemption! I have behaved most extravagantly, both to your lady and Emily. I shall never be able to look them in the face again.

Belf. Ay, ay, I foresaw this. Did not I tell you that you would expose yourself confoundedly? However, I'll be an advocate for you—my Florival shall be an advocate for you; and I make no doubt but you will be taken into favour again.

Emily. Does he deserve it, major?

Belf. Why, madam, I can't say much for him, or myself either, faith—We must rely entirely on your goodness.

Flo. He's a true penitent, I see, madam; and I'll answer for it, he loves you to excess—Nay, look on him.

Emily. Was it well done, colonel, to cherish a mean distrust of me? to trifle with the partiality I had shown to you; and to endeavour to give

me pain, merely to secure a poor triumph over my weakness to yourself?

Tam. I am ashamed to answer you.

Bell. Ashamed! and so you well may, indeed.

Tam. I see my absurdity—all I wish is to be laughed at, and forgiven.

Belf. A very reasonable request. Come, madam, pity the poor fellow, and admit him to your good graces again.

Flo. Let us prevail on you, dear madam.

Emily. Well—now I see he is most heartily mortified, I am half inclined to pity him.

Tam. Generous Emily!

Bell. Go, you provoking wretch! 'tis more than you deserve: [*To* TAM.

Tam. It shall be the future study of my life to deserve this pardon. [*Kissing her hand.*] Belford, I give you joy—Madam [*To* FLORIVAL.]—I have behaved so ill to you, I scarce know how to give you joy as I ought.

Belf. Come, come, no more of this at present. Now we have on all sides ratified the preliminaries, let us settle the definitive treaty as soon as we can——We have been two lucky fellows, Tamper—I have been fortunate in finding my mistress, and you as fortunate in not losing yours.

Tam. So we have, Belford; and I wish every brave officer in his Majesty's service had secured to himself such comfortable winter-quarters as we have, after a glorious campaign.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

BY

BICKERSTAFF.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
Sir William Meadows.	Rossetta, *attached to* Young Meadows.
Young Meadows, *his son.*	Lucinda, *attached to* Eustace.
Justice Woodcock, *father to* Lucinda.	Deborah Woodcock, *sister to* Justice Woodcock.
Hawthorn, *a country squire.*	Margery, *seduced by* Hodge.
Eustace, *attached to* Lucinda.	
Hodge, *a bumpkin.*	

Scene—a village in England.

ACT. I.

SCENE I.—*A garden with statues, fountains, and flower-pots. Several arbours appear in the side scenes.*

Rossetta *and* Lucinda *are discovered at work, seated upon two garden-chairs.*

AIR.

Ros. Hope! thou nurse of young desire,
Fairy promiser of joy,
Painted vapour, glow-worm fire,
Temp'rate sweet, that ne'er can cloy:

Luc. Hope! thou earnest of delight,
Softest soother of the mind,
Balmy cordial, prospect bright,
Surest friend the wretched find:

Both. Kind deceiver, flatter still,
Deal out pleasures unpossest,
With thy dreams my fancy fill,
And in wishes make me blest.

Luc. Heigho!—Rossetta?

Ros. Well, child, what do you say?

Luc. 'Tis a devilish thing to live in a village a hundred miles from the capital, with a preposterous gouty father, and a superannuated maiden aunt.—I am heartily sick of my situation.

Ros. And with reason—But 'tis in a great measure your own fault: here is this Mr Eustace, a man of character and family; he likes you, you like him, you know one another's minds, and yet you will not resolve to make yourself happy with him.

AIR.

Whence can you inherit
So slavish a spirit?
Confin'd thus, and chain'd to a log!
Now fondled, now chid,
Permitted, forbid;
'Tis leading the life of a dog.

For shame, you a lover!
More firmness discover;
Take courage, nor here longer mope;
Resist and be free,
Run riot, like me,
And, to perfect the picture, elope.

Luc. And is this your advice?

Ros. Positively.

Luc. Here's my hand; positively I'll follow it. I have already sent to my gentleman, who is now in the country, to let him know he may come hither this day; we will make use of the opportunity to settle all preliminaries—And then—But take notice, whenever we decamp, you march off along with us.

Ros. Oh! madam, your servant; I have no inclination to be left behind, I assure you—But you say you got acquainted with this spark, while you were with your mother during her last illness at Bath, so that your father has never seen him?

Luc. Never in his life, my dear: and, I am confident, he entertains not the least suspicion of my having any such connection: my aunt, indeed, has her doubts and surmises; but, besides that my father will not allow any one to be wiser than himself, it is an established maxim between these affectionate relations, never to agree in any thing.

Ros. Except being absurd; you must allow they sympathize perfectly in that—But, now we are on the subject, I desire to know, what I am to do with this wicked old justice of peace, this libidinous father of yours? He follows me about the house like a tame goat.

Luc. Nay, I'll assure you he hath been a wag in his time—you must have a care of yourself.

Ros. Wretched me! to fall into such hands, who have been just forced to run away from my parents to avoid an odious marriage——You smile at that now; and I know you think me whimsical, as you have often told me: but you must excuse my being a little over-delicate in this particular.

AIR.

My heart's my own, my will is free,
And so shall be my voice;
No mortal man shall wed with me,
Till first he's made my choice.
Let parent's rule, cry nature's laws;
And children still obey;
And is there, then, no saving clause,
Against tyrannic sway?

Luc. Well, but my dear mad girl——

Ros. Lucinda, don't talk to me—Was your father to go to London; meet there by accident with an old fellow as wrong-headed as himself; and in a fit of absurd friendship, agree to marry you to that old fellow's son, whom you had never seen, without consulting your inclinations, or allowing you a negative, in case he should not prove agreeable——

Luc. Why, I should think it a little hard, I confess—yet, when I see you in the character of a chambermaid—

Ros. It is the only character, my dear, in which I could hope to lie concealed; and, I can tell you, I was reduced to the last extremity, when, in consequence of our old boarding-school friendship, I applied to you to receive me in this capacity: for we expected the parties the very next week.

Luc. But had not you a message from your intended spouse, to let you know he was as little inclined to such ill-concerted nuptials as you were?

Ros. More than so; he wrote to advise me, by all means, to contrive some method of breaking them off, for he had rather return to his dear studies at Oxford; and, after that, what hopes could I have of being happy with him?

Luc. Then you are not at all uneasy at the strange rout you must have occasioned at home? I warrant, during this month you have been absent—

Ros. Oh! don't mention it, my dear! I have had so many admirers, since I commenced Abigail, that I am quite charmed with my situation—But hold, who stalks yonder in the yard, that the dogs are so glad to see?

Luc. Daddy Hawthorn, as I live! He is come to pay my father a visit; and never more luckily, for he always forces him abroad. By the way, what will you do with yourself, while I step into the house to see after my trusty messenger, Hodge?

Ros. No matter; I'll sit down in that arbour, and listen to the singing of the birds: you know I am fond of melancholy amusements.

Luc. So it seems, indeed: sure, Rossetta, none of your admirers had power to touch your heart; you are not in love I hope?

Ros. In love! that's pleasant. Who do you suppose I should be in love with, pray?

Luc. Why, let me see——What do you think of Thomas, our gardener? There he is, at the other end of the walk—He's a pretty young man, and the servants say, he's always writing verses on you.

Ros. Indeed, Lucinda, you are very silly.

Luc. Indeed, Rossetta, that blush makes you look very handsome.

Ros. Blush! I am sure I don't blush.

Luc. Ha, ha, ha!

Ros. Pshaw, Lucinda, how can you be so ridiculous?

Luc. Well, don't be angry, and I have done ——But suppose you did like him, how could you help yourself?

AIR.

When once Love's subtle poison gains
A passage to the female breast,
Like lightning rushing through the veins,
Each wish, and every thought's possest:
To heal the pangs our minds endure,
Reason in vain its skill applies;
Nought can afford the heart a cure,
But what is pleasing to the eyes. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Young Mea. Let me see—on the fifteenth of June, at half an hour past five in the morning, [*Taking out a pocket-book.*] I left my father's house, unknown to any one, having made free with a coat and jacket of our gardener's, which fitted me, by way of a disguise: so says my pocket-book; and chance directing me to this village, on the twentieth of the same month I procured a recommendation to the worshipful Justice Woodcock, to be the superintendant of his pumpkins and cabbages, because I would let my father see, I chose to run any lengths, rather than submit to what his obstinacy would have forced me, a marriage against my inclination, with a woman I never saw. [*Puts up the book, and takes up a watering-pot.*] Here I have been three weeks, and in that time I am as much altered, as if I had changed my nature with my habit. 'Sdeath, to fall in love with a chambermaid! And yet, if I could forget that I am the son and heir of sir William Meadows—But that's impossible.

AIR.

O! had I been by fate decreed
Some humble cottage swain;
In fair Rossetta's sight to feed
My sheep upon the plain;
What bliss had I been born to taste,
Which now I ne'er must know!
Ye envious powers! why have ye placed
My fair one's lot so low?

Ha! who was it I had a glimpse of as I past by that arbour! Was it not she sat reading there! the trembling of my heart tells me my eyes were not mistaken—Here she comes.

Enter ROSSETTA.

Ros. Lucinda was certainly in the right of it, and yet I blush to own my weakness even to myself—Marry, hang the fellow for not being a gentleman!

Young Mea. I am determined I won't speak to her [*Turning to a rose-tree, and plucking the flowers.*]. Now or never is the time to conquer myself: besides, I have some reason to believe the girl has no aversion to me: and, as I wish not to do her an injury, it would be cruel to fill her head with notions of what can never happen. [*Hums a tune.*] Pshaw! rot these roses, how they prick one's fingers!

Ros. He takes no notice of me; but so much the better; I'll be as indifferent as he is. I am sure the poor lad likes me; and if I was to give him any encouragement, I suppose the next thing he talked of would be buying a ring, and being asked in church—Oh, dear pride! I thank you for that thought.

Young Mea. Hah, going without a word, a look!—I can't bear that—Mrs Rossetta, I am gathering a few roses here, if you please to take them in with you.

Ros. Thank you, Mr Thomas, but all my lady's flower pots are full.

Young Mea. Will you accept of them for yourself, then? [*Catching hold of her.*] What's the matter? you look as if you were angry with me.

Ros. Pray, let go my hand.

Young Mea. Nay prithee, why is this? you shan't go; I have something to say to you.

Ros. Well, but I must go, I will go; I desire, Mr Thomas—

AIR.

Gentle youth, ah, tell me why
Still you force me thus to fly?
Cease, oh! cease, to persevere;
Speak not what I must not hear;
To my heart its ease restore;
Go, and never see me more. [*Exit.*

Young Mea. This girl is a riddle!—That she loves me, I think there is no room to doubt; she takes a thousand opportunities to let me see it: and yet, when I speak to her, she will hardly give me an answer; and, if I attempt the smallest familiarity, is gone in an instant—I feel my passion for her grow every day more and more violent—Well, would I marry her?—would I make a mistress of her if I could?—Two things, called prudence and honour, forbid either. What am I pursuing, then? A shadow. Sure my evil genius laid this snare in my way. However, there is one comfort, it is in my power to fly from it; if so, why do I hesitate? I am distracted, unable to determine any thing.

AIR.

Still in hopes to get the better
Of my stubborn flame I try;
Swear this moment to forget her,
And the next my oath deny.
Now, prepared with scorn to treat her,
Every charm in thought I brave,
Boast my freedom—fly to meet her,
And confess myself her slave. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A hall in* JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *house.*

Enter HAWTHORN, *with a fowling-piece in his hands, and a net with birds at his girdle: and, afterwards,* JUSTICE WOODCOCK.

AIR.

There was a jolly miller once,
Lived on the river Dee;
He worked and sung, from morn till night;
No lark more blythe than he.
And this the burthen of his song,
For ever used to be——
I care for nobody, no, not I,
If no one cares for me.

House, here, house! what, all gadding, all abroad! house, I say, hilli-ho, ho!

J. Wood. Here's a noise, here's a racket! William, Robert, Hodge! why does not somebody answer? Odds my life, I believe the fellows have lost their hearing! [*Entering.*] Oh, master Hawthorn! I guessed it was some such mad-cap—Are you there?

Haw. Am I here? Yes: and, if you had been where I was three hours ago, you would find the good effects of it by this time: but you have got the lazy, unwholesome, London fashion, of lying a bed in a morning, and there's gout for you—Why, sir, I have not been in bed five minutes after sun-rise these thirty years, am generally up before it; and I never took a dose of physic but once in my life, and that was in compliment to a cousin of mine, an apothecary, that had just set up business.

J. Wood. Well, but, master Hawthorn, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; for, I say, sleep is necessary for a man; ay, and I'll maintain it.

Haw. What! when I maintain the contrary? ——Look you, neighbour Woodcock, you are a rich man, a man of worship, a justice of peace, and all that; but learn to know the respect that is due to the sound from the infirm; and allow me that superiority a good constitution gives me over you—Health is the greatest of all possessions; and 'tis a maxim with me, that an hale cobler is a better man than a sick king.

J. Wood. Well, well, you are a sportsman.

Haw. And so would you, too, if you would take my advice. A sportsman! why, there is nothing like it: I would not exchange the satisfaction I feel, while I am beating the lawns and thickets about my little farm, for all the entertainments and pageantry in Christendom.

AIR.

Let gay ones and great
Make the most of their fate,
From pleasure to pleasure they run:
Well, who cares a jot,
I envy them not,
While I have my dog and my gun.
For exercise, air,
To the fields I repair,
With spirits unclouded and light:
The blisses I find,
No stings leave behind,
But health and diversion unite.

Enter HODGE.

Hodge. Did your worship call, sir?

J. Wood. Call, sir? where have you and the rest of these rascals been? but, I suppose, I need not ask—You must know there is a statute, a fair for hiring servants, held upon my green to-day; we have it usually at this season of the year, and it never fails to put all the folks here-about out of their senses.

Hodge. Lord, your honour, look out, and see what a nice show they make yonder; they had got pipers, and fidlers, and were dancing as I came along, for dear life—I never saw such a mortal throng in our village in all my born days again.

Haw. Why, I like this now; this is as it should be.

J. Wood. No, no, 'tis a very foolish piece of business; good for nothing but to promote idleness and the getting of bastards: but I shall take measures for preventing it another year, and I doubt whether I am not sufficiently authorised already; for, by an act passed *Anno undecimo Caroli primi*, which impowers a justice of peace, who is lord of the manor———

Haw. Come, come, never mind the act; let me tell you, this is a very proper, a very useful meeting; I want a servant or two myself, I must go see what your market affords;—and you shall go, and the girls, my little Lucy and the other young rogue, and we'll make a day on't as well as the rest.

J. Wood. I wish, master Hawthorn, I could teach you to be a little more sedate: why won't you take pattern by me, and consider your dignity?—Odds heart, I don't wonder you are not a rich man; you laugh too much ever to be rich.

Haw. Right, neighbour Woodcock! health,

good-humour, and competence, is my motto: and, if my executors have a mind, they are welcome to make it my epitaph.

AIR.

The honest heart, whose thoughts are clear
From fraud, disguise, and guile,
Need neither fortune's frowning fear,
Nor court the harlot's smile.

The greatness, that would make us grave,
Is but an empty thing:
What more than mirth would mortals have?
The cheerful man's a king.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

LUCINDA, HODGE.

Luc. Hist, hist, Hodge!

Hodge. Who calls? here am I.

Luc. Well, have you been?—

Hodge. Been? ay, I ha' been far enough, an that be all: you never knew any thing fall out so crossly in your born days.

Luc. Why, what's the matter?

Hodge. Why, you know, I dare not take a horse out of his worship's stables this morning, for fear it should be missed, and breed questions; and our old nag at home was so cruelly beat i' th' hoofs, that, poor beast, it had not a foot to set to ground; so I was fain to go to farmer Ploughshare's, at the Grange, to borrow the loan of his bald filly: and, would you think it? after walking all that way—de'el from me, if the cross-grained toad did not deny me the favour.

Luc. Unlucky!

Hodge. Well, then I went my ways to the King's-head in the village, but all their cattle were at plough: and I was as far to seek below at the turnpike: so at last, for want of a better, I was forced to take up with dame Quickset's blind mare.

Luc. Oh, then you have been?

Hodge. Yes, yes, I ha' been.

Luc. Psha! Why did not you say so at once?

Hodge. Aye, but I have had a main tiresome jaunt on't, for she is a sorry jade at best.

Luc. Well, well, did you see Mr Eustace, and what did he say to you?—Come, quick—have you e'er a letter?

Hodge. Yes, he gave me a letter, if I ha'na' lost it.

Luc. Lost it, man!

Hodge. Nay, nay, have a bit of patience: adwawns, you are always in such a hurry. [*Rummaging his pockets.*] I put it somewhere in this waistcoat pocket. Oh, here it is!

Luc. So! give it me.

[*Reads the letter to herself.*

Hodge. Lord-a-mercy! how my arm achs with beating that plaguy beast; I'll be hanged if I won'na rather ha' thrashed half a day, than ha' ridden her.

Luc. Well, Hodge, you have done your business very well.

Hodge. Well, have not I, now?

Luc. Yes—Mr Eustace tells me, in this letter, that he will be in the green lane, at the other end of the village, by twelve o'clock—You know where he came before?

Hodge. Ay, ay.

Luc. Well, you must go there; and wait till he arrives, and watch your opportunity to introduce him, across the fields, into the little summer-house, on the left side of the garden.

Hodge. That's enough.

Luc. But take particular care that nobody sees you.

Hodge. I warrant you.

Luc. Nor, for your life, drop a word of it to any mortal!

Hodge. Never fear me.

Luc. And, Hodge———

AIR.

Hodge. Well, well, say no more;
Sure you told me before;
I see the full length of my feather;
Do you think I'm a fool,
That I need go to school?
I can spell you, and put you together.

A word to the wise,
Will always suffice;
Addsniggers, go talk to your parrot;
I'm not such an elf,
Though I say it myself,
But I know a sheep's head from a carrot.

[*Exit* HODGE.

Luc. How severe is my case! Here I am obliged to carry on a clandestine correspondence with a man in all respects my equal, because the oddity of my father's temper is such, that I dare not tell him I have ever yet seen the person I should like to marry—But, perhaps, he has quality in his eye, and hopes, one day or other, as I am his only child, to match me with a title—vain imagination!

AIR.

Cupid, god of soft persuasion,
Take the helpless lover's part:
Seize, oh seize some kind occasion,
To reward a faithful heart.

Justly those we tyrants call,
Who the body would enthral;
Tyrants of more cruel kind,
Those, who would enslave the mind.

What is grandeur? foe to rest,
Childish mummery at best.
Happy I in humble state;
Catch, ye fools, the glittering bait.
[*Exit.*

SCENE V.—*A field with a stile.*

Enter HODGE, *followed by* MARGERY; *and, some time after, enter* YOUNG MEADOWS.

Hodge. What does the wench follow me for? Odds flesh, folk may well talk, to see you dangling after me every where, like a tantony pig: find some other road, can't you? and don't keep wherreting me with your nonsense.

Mar. Nay, pray you, Hodge, stay, and let me speak to you a bit!

Hodge. Well; what sayn you?

Mar. Deart heart, how can you be so barbarous? and is this the way you serve me after all? and won't you keep your word, Hodge?

Hodge. Why, no, I won't, I tell you; I have changed my mind.

Mar. Nay, but surely, surely—Consider, Hodge, you are obligated in conscience to make me an honest woman.

Hodge. Obligated in conscience! How am I obligated?

Mar. Because you are; and none but the basest of rogues would bring a poor girl to shame, and afterwards leave her to the wide world.

Hodge. Bring you to shame! Don't make me speak, Madge; don't make me speak.

Mar. Yes, do; speak your worst.

Hodge. Why, then, if you go to that, you were fain to leave your own village down in the West, for a bastard you had by the clerk of the parish, and I'll bring the man shall say it to your face.

Mar. No, no, Hodge; 'tis no such thing; 'tis a base lie of farmer Ploughshare's—But, I know what makes you false-hearted to me—that you may keep company with young madam's waiting-woman; and I am sure she's no fit body for a poor man's wife.

Hodge. How should you know what she's fit for? She's fit for as much as you, mayhap; don't find fault with your betters, Madge. [*Seeing* YOUNG MEADOWS.] Oh! master Thomas, I have a word or two to say to you; pray, did not you go down the village one day last week with a basket of something upon your shoulder?

Young Mea. Well, and what then?

Hodge. Nay, not much, only the ostler at the Green Man was saying, as how there was a passenger at their house as see'd you go by, and said he know'd you; and axt a mort of questions—So I thought I'd tell you.

Young Mea. The devil! ask questions about me! I know nobody in this part of the country; there must be some mistake in it.—Come hither, Hodge. [*Exit* HODGE.

Mar. A nasty, ungrateful fellow, to use me at this rate, after being to him as I have.—Well well, I wish all poor girls would take warning by my mishap, and never have nothing to say to none of them.

AIR.

How happy were my days, till now!
I ne'er did sorrow feel;
I rose, with joy, to milk my cow,
Or take my spinning-wheel.

My heart was lighter than a fly,
Like any bird I sung,
Till he pretended love, and I
Believed his flattering tongue.

Oh the fool, the silly silly fool,
Who trusts what man may be!
I wish I was a maid again,
And in my own country. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.—*A green, with the prospect of a village, and the representation of a statute, or fair.*

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, MRS DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, ROSSETTA, YOUNG MEADOWS, HODGE, *and several country people.*

Hodge. This way, your worship, this way. Why don't you stand aside there? Here's his worship a coming.

Coun. His worship!

J. Wood. Fye, fye, what a crowd's this! Odd, I'll put some of them in the stocks. [*Striking a fellow.*] Stand out of the way, sirrah!

Haw. For shame, neighbour! Well, my lad, are you willing to serve the king?

Coun. Why, can you list ma! Serve the king, master! no, no! I pay the king, that's enough for me. Ho, ho, ho!

Haw. Well said, Sturdy-boots!

J. Wood. Nay, if you talk to them, they'll answer you.

Haw. I would have them do so; I like they should.—Well, madam, is not this a fine sight? I did not know my neighbour's estate had been so well peopled.—Are all these his own tenants?

Mrs Deb. More than are good of them, Mr Hawthorn. I don't like to see such a parcel of young hussies fleering with the fellows.

Haw. There's a lass. [*Beckoning to a country girl.*] Come hither, my pretty maid. What brings you here? [*Chucking her under the chin.*] Do you come to look for a service?

C. Girl. Yes; an't please you.

Haw. Well, and what place are you for?

C. Girl. All work, an't please you.

J. Wood. Ay, ay, I don't doubt it; any work you'll put her to.

Mrs Deb. She looks like a brazen one—Go, hussy.

Haw. Here's another. [*Catching a girl that goes by.*] What health, what bloom!—This is Nature's work; no art, no daubing. Don't be ashamed, child; those cheeks of thine are enough to put a whole drawing-room out of countenance.

Hodge. Now, your honour, now the sport will come. The gut-scrapers are here, and some among them are going to sing and dance. Why, there's not the like of our statute, mun, in five counties; others are but fools to it.

Servant-man. Come, good people, make a ring, and stand out, fellow servants, as many of you as are willing, and able to bear a bob. We'll let my masters and mistresses see we can do something, at least; if they won't hire us, it shan't be our fault. Strike up the Servant's Medley.

AIR.

House-maid.

I pray ye, gentles, list to me.
I'm young, and strong, and clean, you see;
I'll not turn tail to any she,
For work that's in the country.
Of all your house the charge I take,
I wash, I scrub, I brew, I bake;
And more can do than here I'll speak,
Depending on your bounty.

Footman.

Behold a blade, who knows his trade
In chamber, hall, and entry:
And what tho' here I now appear,
I've served the best of gentry.
A footman would you have?
I can dress, and comb, and shave;
For I a handy lad am:
On a message I can go,
And slip a billet-doux,
With your humble servant, madam.

Cook-maid.

Who wants a good cook, my hand they must cross;
For plain wholesome dishes I'm ne'er at a loss;
And what are your soups, your ragouts, and your sauce,
Compared to old English roast beef?

Carter.

If you want a young man, with a true honest heart,
Who knows how to manage a plough and a cart,
Here's one for your purpose, come take me and try;
You'll say you ne'er met with a better nor I,
Ge ho Dobbin, &c.

Chorus.

My masters and mistresses, hither repair;
What servants you want, you'll find in our fair;
Men and maids fit for all sorts of stations there be;
And, as for the wages, we shan't disagree.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A parlour in* JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *house.*

Enter LUCINDA *and* EUSTACE.

Luc. WELL, am not I a bold adventurer, to bring you into my father's house at noon-day? Though, to say the truth, we are safer here than in the garden; for there is not a human creature under the roof besides ourselves.

Eus. Then why not put our scheme into execution this moment? I have a post-chaise ready.

Luc. Fye! how can you talk so lightly? I protest I am afraid to have any thing to do with you; your passion seems too much founded on appetite; and my aunt Deborah says——

Eus. What! By all the rapture my heart now feels——

Luc. Oh, to be sure, promise and vow! it sounds prettily, and never fails to impose upon a fond female.

AIR.

We women like weak Indians trade,
Whose judgment tinsel show decoys;
Dupes to our folly we are made,
While artful man the gain enjoys:
We give our treasure, to be paid,
A paltry, poor return! in toys.

Eus. Well, I see you've a mind to divert yourself with me; but I wish I could prevail on you to be a little serious.

Luc. Seriously, then, what would you desire me to say? I have promised to run away with you; which is as great a concession as any reasonable lover can expect from his mistress.

Eus. Yes; but, you dear, provoking angel, you have not told me when you will run away with me.

Luc. Why that, I confess, requires some consideration.

Eus. Yet remember, while you are deliberating, the season, now so favourable to us, may elapse, never to return.

AIR.

Think, my fairest, how delay
Danger every moment brings;
Time flies swift, and will away;
Time that's ever on its wings;
Doubting and suspence at best,
Lovers late repentance cost;
Let us, eager to be blest,
Seize occasion e'er 'tis past.

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK, *and* MRS DEBORAH WOODCOCK.

J. Wood. Why, here is nothing in the world in this house but cater-wauling from morning till night, nothing but cater-wauling! Hoity toity! who have we here?

Luc. My father, and my aunt!

Eus. The devil! what shall we do?

Luc. Take no notice of them, only observe me.—[*Speaks aloud to* EUS.]—Upon my word, sir, I don't know what to say to it, unless the justice was at home; he is just stepped into the village with some company; but, if you'll sit down a moment, I dare swear he will return—[*Pretends to see the justice.*]—O! Sir, here is my papa!

J. Wood. Here is your papa, hussy! Who's this you have got with you? Hark you, sirrah, who are you, ye dog? And what's your business here?

Eus. Sir, this is a language I am not used to.

J. Wood. Don't answer me, you rascal—I am a justice of the peace; and if I hear a word out your mouth, I'll send you to jail, for all your laced hat.

Mrs Deb. Send him to jail, brother, that's right.

J. Wood. And how do you know it's right? How should you know any thing's right? Sister Deborah, you are never in the right.

Mrs Deb. Brother, this is the man I have been telling you about so long.

J. Wood. What man, goody Wise-acre!

Mrs Deb. Why, the man your daughter has an intrigue with: but I hope you will not believe it now, though you see it with your own eyes—Come, hussy, confess, and don't let your father make a fool of himself any longer.

Luc. Confess what, aunt! This gentleman is a music-master: he goes about the country, teaching ladies to play and sing; and has been recommended to instruct me: I could not turn him out when he came to offer his service; and did not know what answer to give him till I saw my papa.

J. Wood. A music-master!

Eus. Yes, sir, that's my profession.

Mrs Deb. It's a lie, young man; it's a lie.—Brother, he is no more a music-master, than I am a music-master.

J. Wood. What then, you know better than the fellow himself? and you will be wiser than all the world?

Mrs Deb. Brother, he does not look like a music-master.

J. Wood. He does not look! Ha, ha, ha! was ever such a poor stupe! well, and what does he look like, then? But I suppose you mean he is not dressed like a music-master, because of his ruffles, and this bit of garnishing about his coat—which seems to be copper, too—why, you silly wretch, these whipper-snappers set up for gentlemen, now-a-days, and give themselves as many airs as if they were people of quality. Hark'e, friend, I suppose you don't come within the vagrant act? You have some settled habitation—where do you live?

Mrs Deb. It is an easy matter for him to tell you a wrong place.

J. Wood. Sister Deborah, don't provoke me.

Mrs Deb. I wish, brother, you would let me examine him a little.

J. Wood. You shan't say a word to him; you shan't say a word to him.

Mrs Deb. She says he was recommended here, brother; ask him by whom?

J. Wood. No, I won't now, because you desire it.

Luc. If my papa did ask the question, aunt, it would be very easily resolved.

Mrs Deb. Who bid you speak, Mrs Nimble Chops? I suppose the man has a tongue in his head, to answer for himself.

J. Wood. Will nobody stop that prating old woman's mouth for me? Get out of the room!

Mrs Deb. Well, so I can, brother; I don't want to stay: but, remember, I tell you, you will make yourself ridiculous in this affair: for, through your own obstinacy, you will have your daughter run away with, before your face.

J. Wood. My daughter! Who will run away with my daughter?

Mrs Deb. That fellow will.

J. Wood. Go, go, you are a wicked, censorious woman.

Luc. Why, sure, madam, you must think me very coming, indeed.

J. Wood. Ay, she judges of others by herself; I remember when she was a girl, her mother dared not trust her the length of her apron-string; she was clambering upon every fellow's back.

Mrs Deb. I was not.

J. Wood. You were

Luc. Well, but why so violent?

AIR.

Believe me, dear aunt,
If you rave thus, and rant,

You'll never a lover persuade;
The men will all fly,
And leave you to die,
Oh, terrible chance! an old maid.
How happy the lass,
Must she come to this pass,
Who ancient virginity 'scapes!
'Twere better on earth
Have five brats at a birth,
Than in hell be a leader of apes.

[*Exit* MRS DEB.

J. Wood. Well done, Lucy! send her about her business; a troublesome, foolish creature! does she think I want to be directed by her? Come hither, my lad; you look tolerable honest?

Eus. I hope, sir, I shall never give you cause to alter your opinion.

J. Wood. No, no, I am not easily deceived; I am generally pretty right in my conjectures.—You must know, I had once a little notion of music myself, and learned upon the fiddle; I could play the Trumpet Minuet, and Buttered Peas, and two or three tunes. I remember, when I was in London, about thirty years ago, there was a song, a great favourite at our club at Nando's coffee-house; Jack Pickle used to sing it for us—a droll fish! but 'tis an old thing; I dare swear you have heard of it often.

AIR.

When I followed a lass that was froward and shy,
Oh! I stuck to her stuff, till I made her comply;
Oh! I took her so lovingly round the waist,
And I smacked her lips, and held her fast:
When hugged and hauled,
She squealed and squalled;
But, though she vowed all I did was in vain,
Yet I pleased her so well, that she bore it again:
Then hoity toity,
Whisking, and frisking,
Green was her gown upon the grass;
Oh! such were the joys of our dancing days.

Eus. Very well, sir, upon my word.

J. Wood. No, no, I forget all these things now; but I could do a little at them once; well, stay and eat your dinner, and we'll talk about your teaching the girl——Lucy, take your master to your spinnet, and shew him what you can do——I must go and give some orders; then hoity, toity, &c. [*Exit* J. WOOD.

Luc. My sweet, pretty papa, your most obedient humble servant; ha, ha, ha! Was ever so whimsical an accident? Well, sir, what do you think of it?

Eus. Think of it! I am in amaze.

Luc. O your awkwardness! I was frightened out of my wits, lest you should not take the hint; and, if I had not turned matters so cleverly, we should have been utterly undone.

Eus. 'Sdeath! why would you bring me into the house? We could expect nothing else: besides, since they did surprise us, it would have been better to have discovered the truth.

Luc. Yes, and never have seen one another afterwards! I know my father better than you do; he has taken it into his head I have no inclination for a husband; and, let me tell you, that is our best security; for if once he has said a thing, he will not be easily persuaded to the contrary.

Eus. And pray, what am I to do now?

Luc. Why, as I think all danger is pretty well over, since he hath invited you to dinner with him, stay; only be cautious of your behaviour; and, in the mean time, I will consider what is next to be done.

Eus. Had not I better go to your father?

Luc. Do so, while I endeavour to recover myself a little out of the flurry this affair has put me in.

Eus. Well, but what sort of a parting is this, without so much as your servant, or good by to you? No ceremony at all? Can you afford me no token to keep up my spirits till I see you again?

Luc. Ah, childish!

Eus. My angel!

AIR.

Eus. Let rakes and libertines, resigned
To sensual pleasures, range!
Here all the sex's charms I find,
And ne'er can cool or change.
Luc. Let vain coquettes and prudes conceal
What most their hearts desire,
With pride my passion I reveal,
Oh! may it ne'er expire.
Both. The sun shall cease to spread its light,
The stars their orbits leave,
And fair creation sink in night,
When I my dear deceive.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Garden.*

Enter ROSSETTA, *musing.*

Ros. If ever poor creature was in a pitiable condition, surely I am. The devil take this fellow, I cannot get him out of my head! and yet I would fain persuade myself I don't care for him: well, but, surely, I am not in love. Let me examine my heart a little: I saw him kissing one of the maids the other day; I could have boxed his ears for it, and have done nothing but find fault and quarrel with the girl ever since. Why was I uneasy at his toying with another woman? What was it to me? Then I dream of him al-

most every night—but that may proceed from his being generally uppermost in my thoughts all day: Oh! worse and worse! Well, he is certainly a pretty lad; he has something uncommon about him, considering his rank: And now, let me only put the case, if he was not a servant, would I, or would I not, prefer him to all the men I ever saw? Why, to be sure, if he was not a servant——In short, I'll ask myself no more questions; for the further I examine, the less reason I shall have to be satisfied.

AIR.

How blessed the maid, whose bosom
No head-strong passion knows;
Her days in joy she passes,
Her nights in calm repose.
Where'er her fancy leads her,
No pain, no fear invades her;
But pleasure,
Without measure,
From every object flows.

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Young Mea. Do you come into the garden, Mrs Rossetta, to put my lilies and roses out of countenance; or, to save me the trouble of watering my flowers, by reviving them? The sun seems to have hid himself a little, to give you an opportunity of supplying his place.

Ros. Where could he get that, now? He never read it in the Academy of Compliments.

Young Mea. Come, don't affect to treat me with contempt; I can suffer any thing better than that. In short, I love you; there is no more to be said: I am angry with myself for it, and strive all I can against it; but, in spite of myself, I love you.

AIR.

In vain, I every art essay,
To pluck the venomed shaft away,
That rankles in my heart;
Deep in the centre fixed and bound—
My efforts but enlarge the wound,
And fiercer make the smart.

Ros. Really, Mr Thomas, this is very improper language; it is what I don't understand; I can't suffer it, and, in short, I don't like it.

Young Mea. Perhaps, you don't like me?

Ros. Well, perhaps, I don't.

Young Mea. Nay, but 'tis not so; come, confess you love me.

Ros. Confess! indeed, I shall confess no such thing: besides, to what purpose should I confess it?

Young Mea. Why, as you say, I don't know to what purpose; only, it would be a satisfaction to me to hear you say so; that's all.

Ros. Why, if I did love you, I can assure you, you would never be the better for it—Women are apt enough to be weak; we cannot always answer for our inclinations, but it is in our power not to give way to them; and, if I was so silly; I say, if I was so indiscreet, which I hope I am not, as to entertain an improper regard, when people's circumstances are quite unsuitable, and there are obstacles in the way that cannot be surmounted———

Young Mea. Oh! to be sure, Mrs Rossetta, to be sure: you are entirely in the right of it——I—know very well, you and I can never come together.

Ros. Well, then, since that is the case, as I assure you it is, I think we had better behave accordingly.

Young Mea. Suppose we make a bargain, then, never to speak to one another any more?

Ros. With all my heart.

Young Mea. Nor look at, nor, if possible, think of, one another?

Ros. I am very willing.

Young Mea. And, as long as we stay in the house together, never to take any notice?

Ros. It is the best way.

Young Mea. Why, I believe it is—Well, Mrs Rossetta———

AIR.

Ros. Begone!—I agree,
From this moment, we're free.
Already the matter I've sworn:
Young Mea. Yet let me complain
Of the fates that ordain—
A trial so hard to be borne.
Ros. When things are not fit,
We should calmly submit;
No cure in reluctance we find:
Young Mea. Then, thus I obey,
Tear your image away,
And banish you quite from my mind.

Ros. Well, now, I think, I am somewhat easier: I am glad I have come to this explanation with him, because it puts an end to things at once.

Young Mea. Hold, Mrs Rossetta, pray stay a moment—The airs this girl gives herself are intolerable! I find now the cause of her behaviour; she despises the meanness of my condition, thinking a gardener below the notice of a lady's waiting-woman: 'Sdeath, I have a good mind to discover myself to her.

Ros. Poor wretch! he does not know what to make of it: I believe he is heartily mortified, but I must not pity him.

Young Mea. It shall be so: I will discover myself to her, and leave the house directly.——

Mrs Rosetta. [*Starting back.*] Pox on't, yonder is the Justice come into the garden!

Ros. O, Lord! he will walk round this way; pray, go about your business; I would not for the world he should see us together.

Young Mea. The devil take him! he's gone across the parterre, and can't hobble here this half hour: I must and will have a little conversation with you.

Ros. Some other time.

Young Mea. This evening, in the green-house, at the lower end of the canal; I have something to communicate to you of importance. Will you meet me there!

Ros. Meet you!

Young Mea. Ay; I have a secret to tell you; and I swear from that moment, there shall be an end of every thing betwixt us.

Ros. Well, well, pray leave me now.

Young Mea. You'll come, then?

Ros. I don't know; perhaps I may.

Young Mea. Nay, but promise.

Ros. What signifies my promising? I may break my promise—but, I tell you, I will.

Young Mea. Enough! Yet, before I leave you, let me desire you to believe I love you more than ever man loved woman; and that, when I relinquish you, I give up all that can make my life supportable.

AIR.

Oh, how shall I, in language weak,
My ardent passion tell;
Or form my fault'ring tongue to speak,
That cruel word, Farewell?

Farewell! but know, though thus we part,
My thoughts can never stray:
Go where I will, my constant heart
Must with my charmer stay.

[*Exit.*

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK.

Ros. What can this be that he wants to tell me? I have a strange curiosity to hear it, methinks—well———

J. Wood. Hem! hem! Rossetta!

Ros. So, I thought the devil would throw him in my way; now, for a courtship of a different kind; but I'll give him a surfeit—Did you call me, sir?

J. Wood. Ay, where are you running so fast?

Ros. I was only going in to the house, sir.

J. Wood. Well, but come here: come here, I say. [*Looking about.*] How do you do, Rossetta?

Ros. Thank you, sir, pretty well.

J. Wood. Why you look as fresh and bloomy to-day—Adad, you little slut, I believe you are painted.

Ros. O, sir! you are pleased to compliment.

J. Wood. Adad, I believe you are——let me try———

Ros. Lord, sir!

J. Wood. What brings you into this garden so often, Rossetta? I hope you don't get eating green fruit and trash? or have you a hankering after some lover in dowlas, who spoils my trees by engraving true lovers knots on them, with your horn and buck-handled knives?——I see your name written upon the ceiling of the servants' hall, with the smoke of a candle; and I suspect———

Ros. Not me, I hope, sir? No, sir; I am of another guess mind, I assure you; for, I have heard say, men are false and fickle———

J. Wood. Ay, that's your flaunting, idle, young fellows; so they are: and they are so damned impudent, I wonder a woman will have any thing to say to them; besides, all that they want is something to brag of, and tell again.

Ros. Why, I own, sir, if ever I was to make a slip, it should be with an elderly gentleman, about seventy, or seventy-five years of age.

J. Wood. No, child, that's out of reason; though I have know many a man turned of threescore with a hale constitution.

Ros. Then, sir, he should be troubled with the gout, have a good strong, substantial, winter-cough—and I should not like him the worse—if he had a small touch of the rheumatism.

J. Wood. Pho, pho, Rossetta! this is jesting.

Ros. No, sir, every body has a taste, and I have mine.

J. Wood. Well, but Rossetta, have you thought of what I was saying to you?

Ros. What was it, sir!

J. Wood. Ah! you know, you know, well enough, hussy.

Ros. Dear sir, consider what has a poor servant to depend on but her character? And, I have heard, you gentlemen will talk one thing before, and another after.

J. Wood. I tell you again, these are the idle, flashy, young dogs: but when you have to do with a staid, sober man———

Ros. And a magistrate, sir!

J. Wood. Right! it is quite a different thing. Well, shall we, Rossetta, shall we?

Ros. Really, sir, I don't know what to say to it.

AIR.

Young I am, and sore afraid:
Would you hurt a harmless maid?
Lead an innocent astray?
Tempt me not, kind sir, I pray.

Men too often we believe;
And, should you my faith deceive,
Ruin first, and then forsake,
Sure my tender heart would break.

J. Wood. Why, you silly girl, I won't do you any harm.

Ros. Won't you, sir?

J. Wood. Not I.

Ros. But won't you, indeed, sir?

J. Wood. Why I tell you, I won't.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!

J. Wood. Hussy, hussy!

Ros. Ha, ha, ha! Your servant, sir, your servant. [*Exit.*

J. Wood. Why, you impudent, audacious——

Enter HAWTHORN.

Haw. So, so, Justice at odds with gravity! his worship playing at romps! Your servant, sir.

J. Wood. Ha! friend Hawthorn!

Haw. I hope I don't spoil sport, neighbour? I thought I had the glimpse of a petticoat as I came in here.

J. Wood. Oh, the maid! Ay, she has been gathering a sallad—But come hither, master Hawthorn, and I'll shew you some alterations I intend to make in my garden.

Haw. No, no, I am no judge of it; besides, I want to talk to you a little more about this—Tell me, sir Justice, were you helping your maid to gather a sallad here, or consulting her taste in your improvements, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Let me see, all among the roses; egad, I like your notion: but you look a little blank upon it: you are ashamed of the business, then, are you?

AIR.

Oons! neighbour, ne'er blush for a trifle like this;
What harm with a fair one to toy and to kiss?
The greatest and gravest—a truce with grimace—
Would do the same thing, were they in the same place.

No age, no profession, no station is free;
To sovereign beauty mankind bends the knee:
That power, resistless, no strength can oppose,
We all love a pretty girl—under the rose.

J. Wood. I profess, master Hawthorn, this is all Indian, all Cherokee language to me; I don't understand a word of it.

Haw. No? may be not: well, sir, will you read this letter, and try whether you can understand that? it is just brought by a servant, who stays for an answer.

J. Wood. A letter, and to me? [*Taking the letter.*] Yes, it is to me; and yet I am sure it comes from no correspondent, that I know of.—Where are my spectacles? not but I can see very well without them, master Hawthorn; but this seems to be a sort of a crabbed hand.

SIR,

'I am ashamed of giving you this trouble;—'but, I am informed there is an unthinking boy, 'a son of mine, now disguised, and in your ser-'vice, in the capacity of a gardener: Tom is a lit-'tle wild, but an honest lad, and no fool either, 'though I am his father that say it.' Tom—oh, this is Thomas, our gardener; I always thought that he was a better man's child then he appeared to be, though I never mentioned it.

Haw. Well, well, sir, pray let us hear the rest of the letter.

J. Wood. Stay, where is the place? Oh, here: 'I am come in quest of my run-away, and write 'this at an inn in your village, while I am swal-'lowing a morsel of dinner: because, not having 'the pleasure of your acquaintance, I did not 'care to intrude, without giving you notice.'—Whoever the person is, he understands good manners. 'I beg leave to wait on you, sir; but 'desire you would keep my arrival a secret, par-'ticularly from the young man.

'WILLIAM MEADOWS.'

I'll assure you, a very well-worded, civil letter. Do you know any thing of the person who writes it, neighbour?

Haw. Let me consider—Meadows! by dad, I believe it is sir William Meadows of Northamptonshire; and, now I remember, I heard, some time ago, that the heir of that family had absconded, on account of a marriage that was disagreeable to him. It is a good many years since I have seen sir William, but we were once well acquainted: and, if you please, sir, I will go and conduct him to the house.

J. Wood. Do so, master Hawthorn, do so—But pray, what sort of a man is this sir William Meadows? Is he a wise man?

Haw. There is no occasion for a man that has five thousand pounds a-year, to be a conjuror: but I suppose you ask that question, because of this story about his son; taking it for granted, that wise parents make wise children?

J. Wood. No doubt of it, master Hawthorn, no doubt of it—I warrant you we shall find now, that this young rascal has fallen in love with some minx, against his father's consent—Why, sir, if I had as many children as king Priam had, that we read of at school, in the destruction of Troy, not one of them should serve me so.

Haw. Well, well, neighbour, perhaps not; but we should remember when we were young ourselves; and I was as likely to play an old dog such a trick in my day, as ever a spark in the hundred; nay, between you and me, I had done it once, had the wench been as willing as I.

AIR.

My Dolly was the fairest thing!
Her breath disclosed the sweets of spring;
And if for summer you would seek,
'Twas painted in her eye, her cheek;
Her swelling bosom, tempting ripe,
Of fruitful autumn was the type:
But, when my tender tale I told,
I found her heart was winter cold.

J. Wood. Ah, you were always a scape-grace rattle-cap!

Haw. Odds heart, neighbour Woodcock, don't tell me! young fellows will be young fellows, though we preach till we are hoarse again; and so there's an end on't.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *hall.*

Enter HODGE *and* MARGERY.

Hodge. So, mistress, who let you in?

Mar. Why, I let myself in.

Hodge. Indeed! Marry come up! why, then pray let yourself out again. Times are come to a pretty pass; I think you might have had the manners to knock at the door, first—What does the wench stand for?

Mar. I want to know if his worship is at home.

Hodge. Well, what's your business with his worship?

Mar. Perhaps you will hear that—Look ye, Hodge, it does not signify talking; I am come, once for all, to know what you intends to do; for I won't be made a fool of any longer.

Hodge. You won't?

Mar. No, that's what I won't, by the best man that ever wore a head; I am the make-game of the whole village upon your account; and I'll try whether your master gives you toleration in your doings.

Hodge. You will?

Mar. Yes, that's what I will; his worship shall be acquainted with all your pranks, and see how you will like to be sent for a soldier.

Hodge. There's the door; take a friend's advice, and go about your business.

Mar. My business is with his worship; and I won't go till I sees him.

Hodge. Look you, Madge; if you make any of your orations here, never stir if I don't set the dogs at you—Will you begone?

Mar. I won't.

Hodge. Here, Towzer! [*Whistling.*] Whu, whu, whu!

AIR.

Was ever poor fellow so plagued with a vixen?
Zawns! Madge don't provoke me, but mind what I say;
You've chose a wrong parson for playing your tricks on,
So pack up your alls, and be trudging away:
You'd better be quiet,
And not breed a riot;
'Sblood, must I stand prating with you here all day?
I've got other matters to mind;
Mayhap you may think me an ass;
But to the contrary you'll find:
A fine piece of work, by the mass!

Enter ROSSETTA.

Ros. Sure I heard the voice of discord here—as I live, an admirer of mine, and, if I mistake not, a rival!—I'll have some sport with them—how now, fellow-servant, what's the matter?

Hodge. Nothing, Mrs Rossetta, only this young woman wants to speak with his worship—Madge, follow me.

Mar. No, Hodge, this is your fine madam; but I am as good flesh and blood as she, and have as clear a skin too, thof I mayn't go so gay; and now she's here, I'll tell her a piece of my mind.

Hodge. Hold your tongue, will you?

Mar. No, I'll speak, if I die for it.

Ros. What's the matter, I say?

Hodge. Why nothing I tell you—Madge—

Mar. Yes, but it is something; its all along of she, and she may be ashamed of herself.

Ros. Bless me, child, do you direct your discourse to me?

Mar. Yes, I do, and to nobody else; there was not a kinder soul breathing than he was till of late; I had never a cross word from him till he kept you company; but all the girls about say there is no such thing as keeping a sweetheart for you.

Ros. Do you hear this, friend Hodge?

Hodge. Why, you don't mind she, I hope? but if that vexes her, I do like you, I do; my mind runs upon nothing else; and if so be as you was agreeable to it, I would marry you to-night, before to-morrow.

Mar. You're a nasty monkey; you are parjured; you know you are, and you deserve to have your eyes tore out.

Hodge. Let me come at her—I'll teach you to call names, and abuse folk.

Mar. Do; strike me—you a man!

Ros. Hold, hold—we shall have a battle here presently, and I may chance to get my cap tore off. Never exasperate a jealous woman—'tis taking a mad bull by the horns—Leave me to manage her.

Hodge. You manage her! I'll kick her.

Ros. No, no, it will be more for my credit to get the better of her by fair means—I warrant I'll bring her to reason.

Hodge. Well, do so then—But may I depend upon you? when shall I speak to the parson?

Ros. We'll talk of that another time—Go.

Hodge. Madge, good bye. [*Exit.*

Ros. The brutality of this fellow shocks me Oh man, man!—you are all alike—A bumpkin here, bred at the barn-door! had he been brought up in a court, could he have been more fashionably vicious? shew me the lord, 'squire, colonel, or captain of them all, can out-do him.

AIR.

Cease, gay seducer, pride to take,
In triumphs o'er the fair;
Since clowns as well can act the rake,
As those in higher sphere.

Where, then, to shun a shameful fate,
Shall helpless beauty go?
In every rank, in every state,
Poor woman finds a foe.

Mar. I am ready to burst—I can't stay in the place any longer.

Ros. Hold, child; come hither.

Mar. Don't speak to me, don't you!

Ros. Well, but I have something to say to you of consequence, and that will be for your good; I suppose this fellow promised you marriage?

Mar. Ay, or he should never have prevailed upon me.

Ros. Well, now you see the ill consequence of trusting to such promises: when once a man hath cheated a woman of her virtue, she has no longer hold of him; he despises her for wanting that which he hath robbed her of; and, like a lawless conqueror, triumphs in the ruin he hath occasioned.

Mar. Nan!

Ros. However, I hope the experience you have got, though somewhat dearly purchased, will be of use to you for the future; and, as to any designs I have upon the heart of your lover, you may make yourself easy; for, I assure you, I shall be no dangerous rival; so go your ways, and be a good girl. [*Exit.*

Mar. Yes—I don't very well understand her talk, but I suppose that's as much as to say she'll keep him herself; well let her, who cares? I don't fear getting better nor he is any day of the year, for the matter of that; and I have a thought come into my head that, may be, will be more to my advantage.

AIR.

Since Hodge proves ungrateful, no further I'll seek,
But go up to the town in the waggon next week;
A service in London is no such disgrace,
And Register's office will get me a place:
Bet Blossom went there, and soon met with a friend;
Folks say in her silks she's now standing an end!
Then why should not I the same maxim pursue,
And better my fortune as other girls do?

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Enter ROSSETTA *and* LUCINDA.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha! Oh admirable, most delectably ridiculous! And so your father is content he should be a music-master, and will have him such, in spite of all your aunt can say to the contrary?

Luc. My father and he, child, are the best companions you ever saw: and have been singing together the most hideous duets! Bobbing Joan, and Old Sir Simon the King: Heaven knows where Eustace could pick them up; but he has gone through half the contents of Pills to purge Melancholy with him.

Ros. And have you resolved to take wing to-night?

Luc. This very night, my dear: my swain will go from hence this evening, but no farther than the inn, where he has left his horses; and, at twelve precisely, he will be with a post-chaise at the little gate that opens from the lawn into the road, where I have promised to meet him.

Ros. Then depend upon it, I'll bear you company.

Luc. We shall slip out when the family are asleep, and I have prepared Hodge already. Well, I hope we shall be happy.

Ros. Never doubt it.

AIR.

In love should there meet a fond pair,
Untutored by fashion or art;
Whose wishes are warm and sincere,
Whose words are th'excess of the heart:

If aught of substantial delight,
On this side the stars can be found,
'Tis sure when that couple unite,
And Cupid by Hymen is crowned.

Enter HAWTHORN.

Haw. Lucy, where are you?

Luc. Your pleasure, sir?

Ros. Mr Hawthorn, your servant.

Haw. What, my little water-wagtail!—The very couple I wished to meet: come hither both of you.

Ros. Now, sir, what would you say to both of us?

Haw. Why, let me look at you a little—have you got on your best gowns, and your best faces? If not, go and trick yourselves out directly, for

I'll tell you a secret—there will be a young bachelor in the house, within these three hours, that may fall to the share of one of you, if you look sharp—but whether mistress or maid——

Ros. Ay, marry, this is something; but how do you know whether either mistress or maid will think him worth acceptance?

Haw. Follow me, follow me; I warrant you.

Luc. I can assure you, Mr Hawthorn, I am very difficult to please.

Ros. And so am I, sir.

Haw. Indeed!

AIR.

Well come, let us hear what the swain must possess,
Who may hope at your feet to implore with success?

Ros. He must be, first of all,
Straight, comely, and tall:

Luc. Neither aukward,
Nor foolish,

Ros. Nor apish,

Luc. Nor mulish;

Luc. } Nor yet should his fortune be small.
Ros. }

Haw. What think'st of a captain?

Luc. All bluster and wounds!

Haw. What think'st of a 'squire?

Ros. To be left for his hounds.

Luc. } The youth that is formed to my mind,
Must be gentle, obliging and kind:
Of all things in nature love me;

Ros. } Have sense both to speak, and to see;
Yet sometimes be silent and blind.

Haw. } 'Fore George, a most rare matrimonial receipt;

Ros. } Observe it, ye fair, in the choice of a mate:

Luc. } Remember, 'tis wedlock determines your fate.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A parlour in* JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *house.*

Enter SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS, *followed by* HAWTHORN.

Sir Wil. WELL, this is excellent; this is mighty good; this is mighty merry, faith! ha, ha, ha! was ever the like heard of? that my boy, Tom, should run away from me, for fear of being forced to marry a girl he never saw? that she should scamper from her father, for fear of being forced to marry him; and that they should run into one another's arms this way in disguise, by mere accident; against their consents, and without knowing it, as a body may say! May I never do an ill turn, master Hawthorn, if it is not one of the oddest adventures partly——

Haw. Why, sir William, it is a romance; a novel; a pleasanter history by half, than the loves of Dorastus and Faunia: we shall have ballads made of it within these two months, setting forth, how a young 'squire became a serving man of low degree; and it will be stuck up with Margaret's Ghost and the Spanish Lady, against the walls of every cottage in the country.

Sir Wil. But what pleases me best of all, master Hawthorn, is the ingenuity of the girl. May I never do an ill turn, when I was called out of the room, and the servant said she wanted to speak to me, if I knew what to make on't: but when the little gipsey took me aside, and told me her name, and how matters stood, I was quite astonished, as a body may say; and could not believe it partly; 'till her young friend that she is with here, assured me of the truth on't: Indeed at last, I began to recollect her face, though I have not set eyes on her before, since she was the height of a full-grown grey-hound.

Haw. Well, sir William, your son, as yet, knows nothing of what has happened, nor of your being come hither; and, if you'll follow my counsel, we'll have some sport with him.—He and his mistress were to meet in the garden this evening by appointment; she's gone to dress herself in all her airs; will you let me direct your proceedings in this affair?

Sir Wil. With all my heart, master Hawthorn, with all my heart; do what you will with me, say what you please for me; I am so overjoyed, and so happy—And may I never do an ill turn, but I am very glad to see you too; ay, and partly as much pleased at that as any thing else; for we have been merry together before now, when we were some years younger: Well, and how has the world gone with you, master Hawthorn, since we saw one another last?

Haw. Why, pretty well, sir William; I have no reason to complain: every one has a mixture of sour with his sweets: but, in the main, I believe, I have done in a degree as tolerably as my neighbours.

AIR.

The world is a well furnished table,
Where guests are promisc'ously set;
We all fare as well as we're able,
And scramble for what we can get,
My simile holds to a tittle,
Some gorge, while some scarce have a taste;

But if I'm content with a little,
Enough is as good as a feast.

Enter ROSSETTA.

Ros. Sir William, I beg pardon for detaining you; but I have had so much difficulty in adjusting my borrowed plumes——

Sir Wil. May I never do an ill turn but they fit you to a T, and you look very well, so you do: Cocks-bones, how your father will chuckle when he comes to hear this!—Her father, master Hawthorn, is as worthy a man as lives by bread, and has been almost out of his senses for the loss of her——But tell me, hussy, has not this been all a scheme, a piece of conjuration between you and my son? Faith, I am half persuaded it has, it looks so like hocus-pocus, as a body may say.

Ros. Upon my honour, sir William, what has happened, has been the mere effect of chance; I came hither unknown to your son, and he unknown to me: I never in the least suspected that Thomas the gardener was other than his appearance spoke him; and, least of all, that he was a person with whom I had so close a connection. Mr Hawthorn can testify the astonishment I was in, when he first informed me of it; but I thought it was my duty to come to an immediate explanation with you.

Sir Wil. Is not she a neat wench, master Hawthorn? May I never do an ill turn but she is—But, you little plaguy devil, how came this love affair between you?

Ros. I have told you the whole truth very ingenuously, sir: since your son and I have been fellow-servants, as I may call it, in this house, I have had more than reason to suspect he had taken a liking to me; and I will own with equal frankness, had I not looked upon him as a person so much below me, I should have had no objection to receiving his courtship.

Haw. Well said, by the lord Harry! all above board, fair and open.

Ros. Perhaps I may be censured by some for this candid declaration; but I love to speak my sentiments; and I assure you, sir William, in my opinion, I should perfer a gardener, with your son's good qualities, to a knight of the shire without them.

AIR.

'Tis not wealth, it is not birth,
Can value to the soul convey;
Minds possess superior worth,
Which chance nor gives, nor takes away.
Like the sun true merit shews;
By nature warm, by nature bright;
With inbred flames he nobly glows,
Nor needs the aid of borrowed light.

Haw. Well, but, sir, we lose time——is not this about the hour appointed to meet in the garden?

Ros. Pretty near it.

Haw. Oons then, what do we stay for? Come, my old friend, come along, and, by the way, we will consult how to manage your interview.

Sir Wil. Ay, but I must speak a word or two to my man about the horses first. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter ROSSETTA, *and* HODGE.

Ros. Well—What's the business?

Hodge. Madam—Mercy on us, I crave pardon!

Ros. Why, Hodge, don't you know me?

Hodge. Mrs Rossetta!

Ros. Ay.

Hodge. Know you! ecod I don't know whether I do or not: never stir, if I did not think it was some lady belonging to the strange gentlefolks: why, you be'nt dizened this way to go to the statute dance presently, be you?

Ros. Have patience, and you'll see:—but is there any thing amiss that you came in so abruptly?

Hodge. Amiss! why there's ruination.

Ros. How?——where?

Hodge. Why, with Miss Lucinda: her aunt has catched she and the gentleman above stairs, and over-heard all their love discourse.

Ros. You don't say so!

Hodge. Ecod, I had like to have popped in among them this instant; but, by good luck, I heard Mrs Deborah's voice, and run down again, as fast as ever my legs could carry me.

Ros. Is your master in the house?

Hodge. What, his worship! no, no, he is gone into the fields to talk with the reapers and people.

Ros. Poor Lucinda, I wish I could go up to her, but I am so engaged with my own affairs——

Hodge. Mistress Rossetta.

Ros. Well.

Hodge. Odds bobs, I must have one smack of your sweet lips!

Ros. Oh stand off, you know I never allow liberties.

Hodge. Nay, but why so coy? there's reason in roasting of eggs; I would not deny you such a thing.

Ros. That's kind: ha, ha, ha!—But what will become of Lucinda? Sir William waits for me, I must be gone. Friendship, a moment by your leave; yet, as our sufferings have been mutual, so shall our joys; I already lose the remembrance of all former pains and anxieties.

AIR.

The traveller benighted,
And led through weary ways,
The lamp of day new lighted,
With joy the dawn surveys.

The rising prospects viewing,
Each look is forward cast;
He smiles, his course pursuing,
Nor thinks of what is past. [*Exit.*

Hodge. Hist, stay! don't I hear a noise?

Luc. [*Within.*] Well, but dear, dear aunt——

Mrs Deb. [*Within.*] You need not speak to me, for it does not signify.

Hodge. Adwawns, they are coming here! ecod I'll get out of the way—Murrain take it, this door is bolted now—So, so.

Enter MRS DEBORAH WOODCOCK.

Mrs Deb. Get along, get along! [*Driving in* LUCINDA *before her.*] you are a scandal to the name of Woodcock; but I was resolved to find you out, for I have suspected you a great while, though your father, silly man, will have you such a poor innocent.

Luc. What shall I do?

Mrs Deb. I was determined to discover what you and your pretended music-master were about, and lay in wait on purpose. I believe he thought to escape me, by slipping into the closet when I knocked at the door; but I was even with him, for now I have him under lock and key, and, please the fates, there he shall remain till your father comes in: I will convince him of his error, whether he will or not.

Luc. You won't be so cruel, I am sure you won't. I thought I had made you my friend by telling you the truth.

Mrs Deb. Telling me the truth, quotha! did I not over-hear your scheme of running away to-night, through the partition? did not I find the very bundles packed up in the room with you, ready for going off? No, brazenface, I found out the truth by my own sagacity, though your father says I am a fool; but now we'll be judged who is the greatest.——And you, Mr Rascal, my brother shall know what an honest servant he has got.

Hodge. Madam!

Mrs Deb. You were to have been aiding and assisting them in their escape, and have been the go-between, it seems, the letter-carrier!

Hodge. Who, me, madam?

Mrs Deb. Yes, you, sirrah.

Hodge. Miss Lucinda, did I ever carry a letter for you? I'll make my affidavy before his worship—

Mrs Deb. Go, go, you are a villain; hold your tongue.

Luc. I own, aunt, I have been very faulty in this affair; I don't pretend to excuse myself; but we are all subject to frailties; consider that, and judge of me by yourself; you were once young, and inexperienced as I am.

AIR.

If ever a fond inclination
Rose in your bosom to rob you of rest,
Reflect with a little compassion,
On the soft pangs, which prevailed in my breast.
Oh where, where would you fly me?
Can you deny me, thus torn and distrest?
Think, when my lover was by me,
Would I, how could I, refuse his request?
Kneeling before you, let me implore you;
Look on me sighing, crying, dying;
Ah! is there no language can move?
If I have been too complying,
Hard was the conflict 'twixt duty and love.

Mrs Deb. This is mighty pretty romantic stuff! but you learn it out of your play-books and novels. Girls in my time had other employments. We worked at our needles, and kept ourselves from idle thoughts: before I was your age, I had finished with my own fingers a complete set of chairs, and a fire-screen in tent stitch; four counterpanes in Marseilles quilting; and the creed and the ten commandments, in the hair of our family: it was framed and glazed, and hung over the parlour chimney-piece, and your poor dear grandfather was prouder of it than of e'er a picture in his house. I never looked into a book, but when I said my prayers, except it was the Complete House-wife, or the great family receipt-book: whereas you are always at your studies! Ah, I never knew a woman come to good, that was fond of reading.

Luc. Well, pray, madam, let me prevail on you to give me the key to let Mr Eustace out, and I promise, I never will proceed a step farther in this business, without your advice and approbation.

Mrs Deb. Have not I told you already my resolution?—Where are my clogs and my bonnet? I'll go out to my brother in the fields; I'm a fool, you know, child; now let's see what the wits will think of themselves——Don't hold me——
[*Exit.*

Luc. I'm not going;—I have thought of a way to be even with you, so you may do as you please. [*Exit.*

Hodge. Well, I thought it would come to this, I'll be shot if I didn't—So, here's a fine job—But what can they do to me?—They can't send me to jail for carrying a letter, seeing there was no treason in it; and how was I obligated to know

my master did not allow of their meetings?—— The worst they can do, is to turn me off, and I am sure the place is no such great purchase—— indeed, I should be sorry to leave Mrs Rossetta, seeing as how matters are so near being brought to an end betwixt us; but she and I may keep company all as one; and I find Madge has been speaking with Gaffer Broadwheels, the waggoner, about her carriage up to London: so that I have got rid of she, and I am sure I have reason to be main glad of it, for she led me a wearisome life —But that's the way of them all.

AIR.

A plague o'' those wenches, they make such a pother,
When once they have let'n a man have his will;
They're always a whining for something or other,
And cry he's unkind in his carriage.
What tho'f he speaks them ne'er so fairly,
Still they keep teazing, teazing on:
You cannot persuade 'em
'Till promise you've made 'em:
And after they've got it,
They tell you——add rot it,
Their character's blasted, they're ruined, undone:
And then to be sure, sir,
There is but one cure, sir,
And all their discourse is of marriage.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*A Greenhouse.*

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Young Mea. I am glad I had the precaution to bring this suit of clothes in my bundle, though I hardly know myself in them again, they appear so strange, and feel so unweildy. However, my gardener's jacket goes on no more.—I wonder this girl does not come [*Looking at his watch.*]: perhaps she won't come—Why then I'll go into the village, take a postchaise, and depart without any farther ceremony.

AIR.

How much superior beauty awes,
The coldest bosoms find;
But with resistless force it draws,
To sense and sweetness joined.
The casket, where, to outward shew,
The workman's art is seen,
Is doubly valued, when we know
It holds a gem within,

Hark! she comes!

Enter SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS *and* HAWTHORN.

Confusion! My father! What can this mean?

Sir Wil. Tom, are not you a sad boy, Tom, to bring me a hundred and forty miles here—May I never do an ill turn, but you deserve to have your head broke; and I have a good mind, partly—What, sirrah, don't you think it worth your while to speak to me?

Young Mea. Forgive me, sir; I own I have been in a fault.

Sir Wil. In a fault! to run away from me because I was going to do you good—May I never do an ill turn, Master Hawthorn, if I did not pick out as fine a girl for him, partly, as any in England! And the rascal run away from me, and came here, and turned gardener. And pray, what did you propose to yourself, Tom? I know you were always fond of botany, as they call it; did you intend to keep the trade going, and advertise fruit-trees and flowering-shrubs, to be had at Meadows's nursery?

Haw. No, sir William, I apprehend the young gentleman designed to lay by the profession: for he has quitted the habit already.

Young Mea. I am so astonished to see you here, sir, that I don't know what to say; but I assure you, if you had not come, I should have returned home to you directly. Pray, sir, how did you find me out?

Sir Wil. No matter, Tom, no matter: it was partly by accident, as a body may say; but what does that signify?—tell me, boy, how stands your stomach towards matrimony? do you think you could digest a wife now?

Young Mea. Pray, sir, don't mention it; I shall always behave myself as a dutiful son ought: I will never marry without your consent, and I hope you won't force me to do it against my own.

Sir Wil. Is not this mighty provoking, master Hawthorn? Why, sirrah, did you ever see the lady I designed for you?

Young Mea. Sir, I don't doubt the lady's merit; but, at present, I am not disposed——

Haw. Nay, but, young gentleman, fair and softly; you should pay some respect to your father in this matter.

Sir Wil. Respect, master Hawthorn! I tell you he shall marry her, or I'll disinherit him! there's once. Look you, Tom, not to make any more words of the matter, I have brought the lady here with me, and I'll see you contracted before we part; or you shall delve and plant cucumbers as long as you live.

Young Mea. Have you brought the lady here, sir? I am sorry for it.

Sir Wil. Why sorry? What, then, you won't marry her? We'll see that! Pray, master Hawthorn, conduct the fair one in. Ay, sir, you may

fret, and dance about, trot at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, if you please; but, marry whip me, I'm resolved.

Enter ROSSETTA.

Haw. Here is the lady, sir William.

Sir Wil. Come in, madam, but turn your face from him—he would not marry you, because he had not seen you: but I'll let him know my choice shall be his, and he shall consent to marry you before he sees you, or not an acre of estate—Pray, sir, walk this way.

Young Mea. Sir, I cannot help thinking your conduct a little extraordinary; but, since you urge me so closely, I must tell you my affections are engaged.

Sir Wil. How, Tom, how!

Young Mea. I was determined, sir, to have got the better of my inclination, and never have done a thing which I knew would be disagreeable to you.

Sir Wil. And pray, sir, who are your affections engaged to? Let me know that.

Young Mea. To a person, sir, whose rank and fortune may be no recommendations to her; but whose charms and accomplishments entitle her to a monarch. I am sorry, sir, it's impossible for me to comply with your commands, and I hope you will not be offended if I quit your presence.

Sir Wil. Not I, not in the least: go about your business.

Young Mea. Sir, I obey.

Haw. Now, madam, is the time.

[ROS. *advances,* YOUNG MEA. *turns round and sees her.*

AIR.

Ros. When we see a lover languish,
And his truth and honour prove,
Ah! how sweet to heal his anguish,
And repay him love for love.

Sir Wil. Well, Tom, will you go away from me now?

Haw. Perhaps, sir William, your son does not like the lady; and, if so, pray don't put a force upon his inclination.

Young Mea. You need not have taken this method, sir, to let me see you are acquainted with my folly, whatever my inclinations are.

Sir Wil. Well, but, Tom, suppose I give my consent to your marrying this young woman?

Young Mea. Your consent, sir?

Ros. Come, sir William, we have carried the jest far enough: I see your son is in a kind of embarrassment, and I don't wonder at it; but this letter, which I received from him a few days before I left my father's house, will, I apprehend, expound the riddle. He cannot be surprised that I ran away from a gentleman who expressed so much dislike to me; and what has happened, since chance has brought us together in masquerade, there is no occasion for me to inform him of.

Young Mea. What is all this? Pray don't make a jest of me!

Sir Wil. May I never do an ill turn, Tom, if it is not truth! this is my friend's daughter.

Young Mea. Sir!

Ros. Even so; 'tis very true, indeed. In short, you have not been a more whimsical gentleman, than I have a gentlewoman; but you see we are designed for one another, 'tis plain.

Young Mea. I know not, madam, what I either hear or see; a thousand things are crowding on my imagination; while, like one just awakened from a dream, I doubt which is reality, which delusion.

Sir Wil. Well, then, Tom, come into the air a bit, and recover yourself.

Young Mea. Nay, dear sir, have a little patience; do you give her to me?

Sir Wil. Give her to you! ay, that I do, and my blessing into the bargain.

Young Mea. Then, sir, I am the happiest man in the world! I enquire no farther; here I fix the utmost limits of my hopes and happiness.

AIR.

Young Mea. All I wish in her obtaining,
Fortune can no more impart:
Ros. Let my eyes, my thoughts explaining,
Speak the feelings of my heart.
Young Mea. Joy and pleasure never ceasing,
Ros. Love with length of years increasing,
Together. Thus my heart and hand surrender,
Here my faith and truth I plight;
Constant still, and kind, and tender,
May our flames burn ever bright!

Haw. Give you joy, sir; and you, fair lady—And, under favour, I'll salute you too, if there's no fear of jealousy.

Young Mea. And may I believe this? Prithee tell me, dear Rosetta!

Ros. Step into the house, and I'll tell you every thing; I must intreat the good offices of sir William and Mr Hawthorn, immediately; for I am in the utmost uneasiness about my poor friend, Lucinda.

Haw. Why, what's the matter?

Ros. I don't know; but I have reason to fear I left her, just now, in very disagreeable circumstances: however, I hope, if there's any mischief fallen out between her father and her lover—

Haw. The music-master! I thought so.

Sir Wil. What, is there a lover in the case? May I never do an ill turn, but I am glad, so I am! for we'll make a double wedding; and, by way of celebrating it, take a trip to London, to shew the brides some of the pleasures of the town. And, Master Hawthorn, you shall be of the party—Come, children, go before us.

Haw. Thank you, sir William; I'll go into the house with you, and to church to see the young folks married; but as to London, I beg to be excused.

AIR.

If ever I'm catched in those regions of smoke,
That seat of confusion and noise,
May I ne'er know the sweets of a slumber unbroke,
Nor the pleasure the country enjoys.
Nay more, let them take me, to punish my sin,
Where, gaping, the cocknies they fleece,
Clap me up with their monsters, cry, masters walk in,
And shew me for twopence a-piece.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *hall.*

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK, MRS DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, EUSTACE, *and* HODGE.

Mrs Deb. Why, brother, do you think I can't hear, or see, or make use of my senses? I tell you, I left that fellow locked up in her closet; and, while I have been with you, they have broke open the door, and got him out again.

J. Wood. Well, you hear what they say?

Mrs Deb. I kare not what they say; it's you encourage them in their impudence——Hark'e, hussy, will you face me down that I did not lock the fellow up?

Luc. Really, aunt, I don't know what you mean; when you talk intelligibly, I'll answer you.

Eus. Seriously, madam, this is carrying the jest a little too far.

Mrs Deb. What, then, I did not catch you together in her chamber, nor overhear your design of going off to-night, nor find the bundles packed up———

Eus. Ha, ha, ha!

Luc. Why, aunt, you rave!

Mrs Deb. Brother, as I am a Christian woman, she confessed the whole affair to me from first to last; and, in this very place, was down upon her marrow-bones for half an hour together, to beg I would conceal it from you.

Hodge. O Lord! O Lord!

Mrs Deb. What, sirrah, would you brazen me too? Take that! [*Boxes him.*

Hodge. I wish you would keep your hands to yourself! you strike me, because you have been telling his worship stories.

J. Wood. Why, sister, you are tipsy!

Mrs Deb. I tipsy, brother! I—that never touch a drop of any thing strong from year's end to year's end; but now and then a little anniseed water, when I have got the colic.

Luc. Well, aunt, you have been complaining of the stomach-ach all day; and may have taken too powerful a dose of your cordial.

J. Wood. Come, come, I see well enough how it is: this is a lie of her own invention, to make herself appear wise: but, you simpleton! did you not know I must find you out?

Enter SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, ROSSETTA, *and* YOUNG MEADOWS.

Young Mea. Bless me, sir! Look who is yonder!

Sir Wil. Cocksbones, Jack! honest Jack, are you there?

Eus. Plague on't, this rencounter is unlucky—Sir William, your servant.

Sir Wil. Your servant again; and again, heartily your servant; may I never do an ill turn, but I am glad to meet you!

J. Wood. Pray, sir William, are you acquainted with this person?

Sir Wil. What, with Jack Eustace! why, he's my kinsman: his mother and I were cousin-germans once removed, and Jack's a very worthy young fellow; may I never do an ill turn if I tell a word of a lie.

J. Wood. Well, but, sir William, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter. This man is a music-master; a thrummer of wire, and a scraper of cat-gut, and teaches my daughter to sing.

Sir Wil. What, Jack Eustace a music-master! No, no; I know him better.

Eus. 'Sdeath, why should I attempt to carry on this absurd farce any longer——What that gentleman tells you is very true, sir: I am no music-master, indeed.

J. Wood. You are not? you own it, then?

Eus. Nay more, sir; I am, as this lady has represented me—[*Pointing to* MRS DEB.]—your daughter's lover; whom, with her own consent, I did intend to have carried off this night; but now that sir William Meadows is here, to tell you who, and what I am, I throw myself upon your generosity, from which I expect greater advantages than I could reap from any imposition on your unsuspicious nature.

Mrs Deb. Well, brother, what have you to say for yourself now? You have made a precious day's work of it! Had my advice been taken! Oh, I am ashamed of you! but you are a weak man, and it can't be helped; however, you should let wiser heads direct you.

Luc. Dear papa, pardon me.

Sir Wil. Ay, do, sir, forgive her; my cousin Jack will make her a good husband, I'll answer for it.

Ros. Stand out of the way, and let me speak two or three words to his worship. Come, my dear sir, though you refuse all the world, I am sure you can deny me nothing: love is a venial fault——You know what I mean? Be reconciled to your daughter, I conjure you, by the memory of our past affections———What! not a word?

AIR.

Go, naughty man! I can't abide you;
Are then our vows so soon forgot?
Ah! now I see if I had tried you,
What would have been my hopeful lot!

But here I charge you—make them happy;
Bless the fond pair, and crown their bliss:
Come, be a dear, good-natured pappy,
And I'll reward you with a kiss.

Mrs Deb. Come, turn out of the house, and be thankful that my brother does not hang you, for he could do it; he's a justice of peace; turn out of the house, I say!

J. Wood. Who gave you authority to turn him out of the house?—He shall stay where he is.

Mrs Deb. He shan't marry my niece.

J. Wood. Shan't he? but I'll shew you the difference now; I say, he shall marry her, and what will you do about it?

Mrs Deb. And you will give him your estate too, will you?

J. Wood. Yes, I will.

Mrs Deb. Why, I'm sure he's a vagabond.

J. Wood. I like him the better; I would have him a vagabond.

Mrs Deb. Brother, brother!

Haw. Come, come, madam, all's very well; and I see my neighbour is what I always thought him, a man of sense and prudence.

Sir Wil. May I never do an ill turn, but I say so too!

J. Wood. Here, young fellow, take my daughter, and bless you both together; but hark you? no money till I die; observe that.

Eus. Sir, in giving me your daughter, you bestow upon me more than the whole world would be without her.

Ros. Dear Lucinda, if words could convey the transports of my heart upon this occasion—

Luc. Words are the tools of hypocrites, the pretenders to friendship; only let us resolve to preserve our esteem for each other.

Young Mea. Dear Jack, I little thought we should ever meet in such odd circumstances——but here has been the strangest business between this lady and me———

Hodge. What, then, Mrs Rossetta, are you turned false-hearted after all? will you marry Thomas the gardener? and did I forsake Madge for this?

Ros. Oh Lord! Hodge, I beg your pardon; I protest I forgot; but I must reconcile you and Madge, I think, and give you a wedding-dinner to make you amends.

Hodge. N—ah.

Haw. Adds me, sir, here are some of your neighbours come to visit you, and I suppose to make up the company of your statute-ball; yonder's music too, I see. Shall we enjoy ourselves? If so, give me your hand.

J. Wood. Why, here's my hand, and we will enjoy ourselves; Heaven bless you both, children, I say! Sister Deborah, you are a fool!

Mrs Deb. You are a fool, brother; and mark my words—But I'll give myself no more trouble about you.

Haw. Fiddlers, strike up!

AIR.

Hence with cares, complaints, and frowning,
Welcome jollity and joy;
Every grief in pleasure drowning,
Mirth this happy night employ:
Let's to friendship do our duty,
Laugh and sing some good old strain;
Drink a health to love and beauty———
May they long in triumph reign!

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

MAYOR OF GARRATT.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN.

SIR JACOB JOLLUP, *a newly created knight.*
MAJOR STURGEON, *of the militia.*
JERRY SNEAK, *a henpecked pinmaker.*
BRUIN, *a surly brute.*
LINT, *an apothecary.*
CRISPIN HEEL-TAP, } *Electors.*
ROGER, }
SNUFFLE, } *Electors*
MATTHEW MUG, }

WOMEN.

MRS SNEAK, *a shrew.*
MRS BRUIN, *a simpleton.*

Scene—Garratt.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—SIR JACOB'S *house at Garrat.*

Enter SIR JACOB.

Sir Jac. ROGER!

Enter ROGER.

Rog. Anan, sir?

Sir Jac. Sir, sirrah! and why not sir Jacob, you rascal? Is that all your manners? Has his Majesty dubbed me a knight for you to make me a mister? Are the candidates near upon coming?

Rog. Nic Goose, the taylor from Putney, they say, will be here in a crack, sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Has Margery fetched in the linen?

Rog. Yes, sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Are the pigs and the poultry locked up in the barn?

Rog. Safe, sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. And the plate and spoons in the pantry?

Rog. Yes, sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Then give me the key: the mob will soon be upon us: and all is fish that comes to their net. Has Ralph laid the cloth in the hall?

Rog. Yes, sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Then let him bring out the turkey and chine, and be sure there is plenty of mustard; and, d'ye hear, Roger? do you stand yourself at the gate, and be careful who you let in.

Rog. I will, sir Jacob. [*Exit* ROGER.

Sir Jac. So, now I believe things are pretty secure; but I can't think what makes my daughters so late ere they——

[*Knocking at the gate.*

Who is that, Roger?

Rog. [*Without.*] Master Lint, the potter-carrier, sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Let him in. What the deuce can he want?

Enter LINT.

Sir Jac. Well, Master Lint, your will?

Lint. Why, I come, sir Jacob, partly to inquire after your health, and partly, as I may say, to settle the business of the day.

Sir Jac. What business?

Lint. Your worship knoweth, this being the day of election, the rabble may be riotous; in which case, maims, bruises, contusions, dislocations, fractures simple and compound, may likely ensue: now, your worship need not be told, that

I am not only a pharmacopolist, or vender of drugs, but likewise chirurgeon, or healer of wounds.

Sir Jac. True, master Lint, and equally skilful in both.

Lint. It is your worship's pleasure to say so, sir Jacob. Is it your worship's will that I lend a ministring hand to the maimed?

Sir Jac. By all means.

Lint. And to whom must I bring in my bill?

Sir Jac. Doubtless the vestry.

Lint. Your worship knows, that, kill or cure, I have contracted to physic the parish-poor by the great: but this must be a separate charge.

Sir Jac. No, no; all under one: come, Master Lint, don't be unreasonable.

Lint. Indeed, sir Jacob, I can hardly afford it. What with the dearness of drugs, and the number of patients the peace has procured me, I can't get salt to my porridge.

Sir Jac. Bad this year, better the next.—We must take things rough and smooth as they run.

Lint. Indeed, I have a very hard bargain.

Sir Jac. No such matter; we are, neighbour Lint, a little better instructed. Formerly, indeed, a fit of illness was very expensive; but now, physic is cheaper than food.

Lint. Marry, heaven forbid!

Sir Jac. No, no; your essences, elixirs, emetics, sweats, drops, and your pastes, and your pills, have silenced your pestles and mortars. Why, a fever that would formerly have cost you a fortune, you may now cure for twelve pennyworth of powder.

Lint. Or kill, sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. And then, as to your scurvies, and gouts, rheumatisms, consumptions, coughs and catarrhs, tar-water and turpentine will make you as sound as a roach.

Lint. Nostrums.

Sir Jac. Specifics, specifics, master Lint.

Lint. I am very sorry to find a man of your worship's——Sir Jacob, a promoter of puffs! an encourager of quacks, sir Jacob!

Sir Jac. Regulars, Lint, regulars; look at their names—Roger, bring me the news—not a soul of them but is either P. L. or M. D.

Lint. Plaguy liars; murderous dogs.

ROGER *brings the News.*

Sir Jac. Liars! Here, look at the list of their cures. The oath of Margery Squab, of Ratcliff-Highway, spinster!

Lint. Perjuries.

Sir Jac. And see here, the churchwardens have signed it.

Lint. Fictitious, sir Jacob!

Sir Jac. Sworn, before the worshipful Mr Justice Drowsy, this thirteenth day of—

Lint. Forgery!

Sir Jac. Why, hark'e, sirrah, do you think Mr Justice Drowsy would set his hand to a forgery?

Lint. I know, sir Jacob, that woman; she has been cured of fifty diseases in a fortnight, and every one of them mortal.

Sir Jac. You impudent—

Lint. Of a dropsy, by West—

Sir Jac. Audacious—

Lint. A cancer by Cleland—

Sir Jac. Arrogant—

Lint. A palsy, by Walker—

Sir Jac. Impertinent—

Lint. Gout and sciatic, by Rock—

Sir Jac. Insolent—

Lint. Consumption, by Steven's drops—

Sir Jac. Paltry—

Lint. And squinting by the chevalier Taylor.—

Sir Jac. Pill-gilding puppy!

Lint. And as to the justice, so the affidavit brings him a shilling—

Sir Jac. Why, hark'e, rascal, how dare you abuse the commission?—You blood-letting, tooth-drawing, corn-cutting, worm-killing, blistering, glistering—

Lint. Bless me, sir Jacob, I did not think to—

Sir Jac. What, sirrah, do you insult me in my office? Here, Roger, out with him!—Turn him out!

Lint. Sir, as I hope to be—

Sir Jac. Away with him! [*Exit*] You scoundrel, if my clerk was within, I'd send you this instant to Bridewell. Things are come to a pretty pass, indeed, if, after all my reading in Wood, and Nelson, and Burn; if, after twenty years attendance at turnpike-meetings, sessions, petty and quarter; if, after settling of rates, licensing ale-houses, and committing of vagrants—But all respect to authority is lost, and *Unus Quorum*, now-a-days, is no more regarded than a petty constable.—— [*Knocking.*] Roger, see who is at the gate? Why, the fellow is deaf!

Rog. Justice Sturgeon, the fishmonger, from Brentford.

Sir Jac. Gad's my life! and major to the Middlesex militia! Usher him in, Roger.

Enter MAJOR STURGEON.

Sir Jac. I could have wished you had come a little sooner, major Sturgeon.

Maj. Why, what has been the matter, sir Jacob?

Sir Jac. There has, major, been here an impudent pill-monger, who has dared to scandalize the whole body of the bench.

Maj. Insolent companion! had I been here, I would have mittimused the rascal at once.

Sir Jac. No, no; he wanted the major more than the magistrate; a few smart strokes from your cane would have fully answered the purpose.——Well, major, our wars are done; the

rattling drum and squeaking fife now wound our ears no more.

Maj. True, sir Jacob, our corps is disembodied, so the French may sleep in security.

Sir Jac. But, major, was it not rather late in life, for you, to enter upon the profession of arms?

Maj. A little aukward in the beginning, sir Jacob: the great difficulty they had was to get me to turn out my toes; but use—use reconciles all them kind of things: why, after my first campaign, I no more minded the noise of the guns than a flea-bite.

Sir Jac. No!

Maj. No! There is more made of these matters than they merit. For the general good, indeed, I am glad of the peace; but, as to my single self—And yet, we have had some desperate duty, sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. No doubt.

Maj. Oh, such marchings and counter-marchings! from Brentford to Ealing, from Ealing to Acton, from Acton to Uxbridge: The dust flying, sun scorching, men sweating—Why, there was our last expedition to Hounslow, that day's work carried off Major Molassas. Bunhill-fields never saw a braver commander! He was an irreparable loss to the service.

Sir Jac. How came that about?

Maj. Why, it was partly the major's own fault: I advised him to pull off his spurs before he went upon action; but he was resolute, and would not be ruled.

Sir Jac. Spirit; zeal for the service.

Maj. Doubtless—But to proceed: In order to get our men in good spirits, we were quartered at Isleworth the evening before; at day-break, our regiment formed at Hounslow town's end, as it might be about here. The major made a fine disposition: on we marched, the men all in high spirits, to attack the gibbet where Gardel is hanging; but, turning down a narrow lane to the left, as it might be about there, in order to possess a pig's stye, that we might take the gallows in flank, and, at all events, secure a retreat, who should come by but a drove of fat oxen for Smithfield! The drums beat in the front, the dogs barked in the rear, the oxen set up a gallop: on they came thundering upon us, broke through our ranks in an instant, and threw the whole corps in confusion.

Sir Jac. Terrible!

Maj. The major's horse took to his heels; away he scoured over the heath. That gallant commander stuck both his spurs into the flank, and for some time held by his mane; but, in crossing a ditch, the horse threw up his head, gave the major a dowse in the chops, and plumped him into a gravel-pit, just by the powder-mills.

Sir Jac. Dreadful!

Maj. Whether from the fall or the fright, the major moved off in a month——Indeed, it was an unfortunate day for us all.

Sir Jac. As how?

Maj. Why, as captain Cucumber, lieutenant Patty-Pan, ensign Tripe, and myself, were returning to town in the Turnham-Green stage, we were stopped near the Hammersmith turnpike, and robbed and stripped by a footpad.

Sir Jac. An unfortunate day, indeed!

Maj. But, in some measure, to make me amends, I got the major's commission.

Sir Jac. You did?

Maj. O yes. I was the only one of the corps that could ride; otherwise, we always succeeded of course: no jumping over heads; no underhand work among us; all men of honour; and, I must do the regiment the justice to say, there never was a set of more amiable officers!

Sir Jac. Quiet and peaceable?

Maj. As lambs, sir Jacob. Excepting one boxing bout at the Three Compasses in Acton, between captain Sheers and the colonel, concerning a game at all-fours, I don't remember a single dispute.

Sir Jac. Why, that was mere mutiny; the captain ought to have been broke.

Maj. He was: for the colonel not only took away his cockade, but his custom; and I don't think poor captain Sheers has done a stitch for him since.

Sir Jac. But you soon supplied the loss of Molossas?

Maj. In part only: no, sir Jacob, he had great experience; he was trained up to arms from his youth: at sixteen he trailed a pike in the artillery-ground; at eighteen got a company in the Smithfield pioneers; and, by the time he was twenty, was made aid-de-camp to sir Jeffery Grub, knight, alderman, and colonel of the yellow.

Sir Jac. A rapid rise!

Maj. Yes; he had a genius for war; but, what I wanted in practice, I made up by doubling my diligence. Our porter at home had been a serjeant of marines: so, after my shop was shut up at night, he used to teach me my exercise; and he had not to deal with a dunce, sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. Your progress was great?

Maj. Amazing! In a week, I could shoulder, and rest, and poize, and turn to the right, and wheel to the left; and, in less than a month, I could fire without winking or blinking.

Sir Jac. A perfect Hannibal!

Maj. Ah, and then I learnt to form lines, and hollows, and squares, and evolutions and revolutions: Let me tell you, sir Jacob, it was lucky that monsieur kept his myrmidons at home, or we should have peppered his flat-bottomed boats.

Sir Jac. Ay, marry, he had a marvellous escape.

Maj. We would a taught him what a Britain can do, who is fighting *pro aris* and *focis*.

Sir Jac. Pray now, major, which do you look upon as the best disciplined troops, the London regiments, or the Middlesex militia?

Maj. Why, sir Jacob, it does not become me to say; but lack-a-day, they have never seen any service—Holiday soldiers! Why, I don't believe, unless, indeed, upon a lord mayor's day, and that mere matter of accident, that they were ever wet to the skin in their lives!

Sir Jac. Indeed!

Maj. No: soldiers for sun-shine, cocknies; they have not the appearance, the air, the freedom, the *Jenny sequoi* that—Oh, could you but see me salute! You have never a spontoon in the house?

Sir Jac. No; but we could get a shove-pike.

Maj. No matter. Well, sir Jacob, and how are your fair daughters, sweet Mrs Sneak and the lovely Mrs Bruin? is she as lively and as brilliant as ever?

Sir Jac. Oh ho, now the murder is out; this visit was intended for them? come, own now, major, did not you expect to meet with them here? You officers are men of such gallantry!

Maj. Why, we do tickle up the ladies, sir Jacob: there is no resisting a red coat.

Sir Jac. True, true, major.

Maj. But that is now all over with me. Farewell to the plumed steeds and neighing troops, as the black man says in the play; like the Roman censurer, I shall retire to my savin field, and there cultivate cabbages.

Sir Jac. Under the shade of your laurels.

Maj. True; I have done with the major, and now return to the magistrate; *Cedunt arma togge.*

Sir Jac. Still in the service of your country?

Maj. True; man was not made for himself; and so, thinking that this would prove a busy day in the justicing way, I am come, sir Jacob, to lend you a hand.

Sir Jac. Done like a neighbour.

Maj. I have brought, as I suppose most of our business will be in the battery way, some warrants and mittimuses ready filled up, with all but the names of the parties, in order to save time.

Sir Jac. A provident magistrate!

Maj. Pray, how shall we manage as to the article of swearing; for, I reckon we shall have oaths as plenty as hops?

Sir Jac. Why, with regard to that branch of our business to-day, I believe the law must be suffered to sleep.

Maj. I should think we might pick up something that's pretty that way.

Sir Jac. No; poor rascals, they would not be able to pay; and as to the stocks, we should never find room for their legs.

Maj. Pray, sir Jacob, is Matthew Marrowbone, the butcher of your town, living or dead?

Sir Jac. Living.

Maj. And swears as much as he used?

Sir Jac. An altered man, major; not an oath comes out of his mouth.

Maj. You surprise me! why, when he frequented our town of a market-day, he has taken out a guinea in oaths—And quite changed?

Sir Jac. Entirely—They say his wife has made him a methodist, and that he preaches at Kensington Common.

Maj. What a deal of mischief those rascals do in the country!—Why, then, we have entirely lost him?

Sir Jac. In that way; but I got a brace of bind-overs from him last week for a couple of bastards.

Maj. Well done, Master Matthew!—But pray, now, sir Jacob—

Mob. [*Without.*] Huzza!

Sir Jac. What's the matter now, Roger?

Enter ROGER.

Rog. The electors desire to know if your worship has any body to recommend?

Sir Jac. By no means; let them be free in their choice: I shan't interfere.

Rog. And if your worship has any objection to Crispin Heel-tap the cobler's being returning officer?

Sir Jac. None, provided the rascal can keep himself sober. Is he there?

Rog. Yes, sir Jacob.—Make way there! stand farther off from the gate: here is madam Sneak in a chair along with her husband.

Maj. Gad's so, you will permit me to convoy her in. [*Exit* MAJOR.

Sir Jac. Now here is one of the evils of war. This Sturgeon was as pains-taking a Billinsgate-broker as any in the bills of mortality. But the fish is got out of his element; the soldier has quite demolished the citizen.

Enter MRS SNEAK, *handed by the* MAJOR.

Mrs Sneak. Dear major, I demand a million of pardons. I have given you a profusion of trouble; but my husband is such a goose-cap, that I can't get no good out of him at home or abroad—Jerry, Jerry Sneak—Your blessing, sir Jacob?

Sir Jac. Daughter, you are welcome to Garratt.

Mrs Sneak. Why, Jerry Sneak! I say—

Enter SNEAK, *with a band-box, a hoop-petticoat under his arm, and cardinal, &c. &c. &c.*

Sneak. Here, lovy!

Mrs Sneak. Here, looby: there, lay these things in the hall; and then go and look after the horse. Are you sure you have got all the things out of the chaise?

Sneak. Yes, chuck.

Mrs Sneak. Then, give me my fan.

[JERRY *drops the things in searching his pocket for the fan.*

Mrs Sneak. Did ever mortal see such a—I

declare, I am quite ashamed to be seen with him abroad: go, get you gone out of my sight.

Sneak. I go, lovy: Good day to my father-in-law.

Sir Jac. I am glad to see you, son Sneak. But where is your brother Bruin, and his wife?

Sneak. He will be here anon, father sir Jacob; he did but just step into the alley, to gather how tickets were sold.

Sir Jac. Very well, son Sneak. [*Exit* SNEAK.

Mrs Sneak. Son! yes, and a pretty son you have provided.

Sir Jac. I hope all for the best: why, what terrible work there would have been, had you married such a one as your sister! one house could never have contained you—Now, I thought this meek mate—

Mrs Sneak. Meek! a mushroom, a milksop!

Sir Jac. Look ye, Molly, I have married you to a man; take care you don't make him a monster. [*Exit* SIR JACOB.

Mrs Sneak. Monster! Why, major, the fellow has no more heart than a mouse. Had my kind stars, indeed, allotted me a military man, I should doubtless have deported myself in a beseemingly manner.

Maj. Unquestionably, madam.

Mrs Sneak. Nor would the major have found, had it been my fortune to intermarry with him, that Molly Jollup would have dishonoured his cloth.

Maj. I should have been too happy.

Mrs Sneak. Indeed, sir, I reverence the army: they are all so brave, so polite, so every thing a woman can wish—

Maj. Oh! Madam—

Mrs Sneak. So elegant, so genteel, so obliging: and then the rank! why, who would dare to affront the wife of a major?

Maj. No man with impunity; that I take the freedom to say, madam.

Mrs Sneak. I know it, good sir. Oh! I am no stranger to what I have missed.

Maj. Oh, Madam!—Let me die but she has infinite merit. [*Aside.*

Mrs Sneak. Then to be joined to a sneaking, slovenly cit; a paltry, prying, pitiful pin-maker!

Maj. Melancholy!—

Mrs Sneak. To be jostled and crammed with the crowd; no respect, no place, no precedence; to be choaked with the smoke of the city; no country jaunts but to Islington; no balls but at Pewterer's-hall!

Maj. Intolerable!

Mrs Sneak. I see, sir, you have a proper sense of my sufferings.

Maj. And would shed my best blood to relieve them.

Mrs Sneak. Gallant gentleman!

Maj. The brave must favour the fair!

Mrs Sneak. Intrepid major!

Maj. Divine Mrs Sneak!

Mrs Sneak. Obliging commander!

Maj. Might I be permitted the honour—

Mrs Sneak. Sir—

Maj. Just to ravish a kiss from your hand!

Mrs Sneak. You have a right to all we can grant.

Maj. Courteous, condescending, complying—Hum—ha!

Enter SNEAK.

Sneak. Chuck, my brother and sister Bruin, are just turning the corner; the Clapham stage was quite full, and so they came by water.

Mrs Sneak. I wish they had all been soused in the Thames—A prying, impertinent puppy!

Maj. Next time I will clap a centinel to secure the door.

Mrs Sneak. Major Sturgeon, permit me to withdraw for a moment; my dress demands a little repair.

Maj. Your ladyship's most entirely devoted—

Mrs Sneak. Ladyship! he is the very Beeglio and Belleisle of the army!

Sneak. Shall I wait upon you, dove?

Mrs Sneak. No, dolt! what, would you leave the major alone? is that your manners, you mongrel?

Maj. Oh, madam, I can never be alone; your sweet idea will be my constant companion.

Mrs Sneak. Mark that! I am sorry, sir, I am obligated to leave you.

Maj. Madam—

Mrs Sneak. Especially with such a wretched companion.

Maj. Oh, madam—

Mrs Sneak. But as soon as my dress is restored, I shall fly to relieve your distress.

Maj. For that moment I shall wait with the greatest impatience.

Mrs Sneak. Courteous commander!

Maj. Parragon of women!

Mrs Sneak. Adieu!

Maj. Adieu! [*Exit* MRS SNEAK.

Sneak. Notwithstanding, sir, all my chicken has said, I am special company when she is not by.

Maj. I doubt not, Mr Sneak.

Sneak. If you would but come one Thursday night to our club, at the Nagg's-Head in the Poultry, you would meet some roaring, rare boys, i'faith! There's Jemmy Perkins the packer, little Tom Simkins the grocer, honest master Muzzle the midwife—

Maj. A goodly company!

Sneak. Ay; and then sometimes we have the Choice Spirits from Comus's Court, and we crack jokes, and are so jolly and funny! I have learnt myself to sing 'An old woman clothed in gray. But I durst not sing out loud, because my wife would overbear me; and she says as how I bawls worserer than the broom-man.

Maj. And you must not think of disobliging your lady?

Sneak. I never does: I never contradicts her, not I.

Maj. That's right: she is a woman of infinite merit.

Sneak. O, a power! And don't you think she is very pretty withal?

Maj. A Venus!

Sneak. Yes, werry like Wenus—Mayhap you have known her some time?

Maj. Long.

Sneak. Belike before she was married?

Maj. I did, Master Sneak.

Sneak. Ay, when she was a wirgin. I thought you was an old acquaintance by your kissing her hand; for we ben't quite so familiar as that—But, then, indeed we han't been married a year.

Maj. The mere honey-moon.

Sneak. Ay, ay, I suppose we shall come to it by degrees.

Bruin. [*Within.*] Come along, Jane; why, you are as pursy and lazy, you jade—

Enter BRUIN *and Wife;* BRUIN *with a cotton cap on; his wife with his wig, great coat, and fishing-rod.*

Bruin. Come, Jane, give me my wig: you slut, how you have tousled the curls! Master Sneak, a good morning to you. Sir, I am your humble servant unknown.

Enter ROGER.

Rog. Mrs Sneak begs to speak with the major.

Maj. I will wait on the lady immediately.

Sneak. Don't tarry an instant; you can't think how impatient she is. [*Exit* MAJOR.] A good morrow to you, brother Bruin; you have had a warm walk across the fields.

Mrs Bruin. Good lord, I am all in a muck—

Bruin. And who may you thank for it, hussy? If you had got up time enough, you might have secured the stage; but you are a lazy lie-a-bed——

Mrs Bruin. There's Mr Sneak keeps my sister a chay.

Bruin. And so he may; but I know better what to do with my money: Indeed if the war had but continued awhile, I don't know what mought ha' been done; but this plaguy peace, with a pox to it, has knocked up all the trade of the Alley.

Mrs Bruin. For the matter of that, we can afford it well enough as it is.

Bruin. And how do you know that? Who told you as much, Mrs Mixen? I hope I know the world better than to trust my concerns with a wife: no, no; thank you for that, Mrs Jane.

Mrs Bruin. And, pray, who is more fitterer to be trusted?

Bruin. Hey-day! Why, the wench is bewitched! Come, come, let us have none of your palaver here—Take twelve-pence and pay the waterman. But, first see if he has broke none of the pipes—And, d'ye hear, Jane, be sure lay the fishing-rod safe.

[*Exit* MRS BRUIN.

Sneak. Od's me, how finely she's managed! What would I give to have my wife as much under!

Bruin. It is your own fault, brother Sneak.

Sneak. D'ye think so? She is a sweet pretty creature.

Bruin. A vixen.

Sneak. Why, to say the truth, she does now and then hector a little; and, between ourselves, domineers like the devil. O, Lord, I lead the life of a dog! Why she allows me but two shillings a week for my pocket.

Bruin. No!

Sneak. No, man; 'tis she that receives and pays all: and, then, I am forced to trot after her to church, with her cardinal, pattens, and prayer-book, for all the world, as if I was still a 'prentice!

Bruin. Zounds! I would souse them all in the kennel.

Sneak. I durst not; and, then, at table I never gets what I loves.

Bruin. The devil!

Sneak. No; she always helps me herself to the tough drumsticks of turkeys, and the damned fat flaps of shoulders of mutton. I don't think I have eat a bit of undercrust since we have been married. You see, brother Bruin, I am almost as thin as a lath.

Bruin. An absolute skeleton!

Sneak. Now, if you think I could carry my point, I would so swinge and leather my fambkin! God, I would so curry and claw her!

Bruin. By the lord Harry, she richly deserves it.

Sneak. Will you, brother, lend me a lift?

Bruin. Command me at all times.

Sneak. Why, then, I will verily pluck up a spirit; and the first time she offers to——

Mrs Sneak. [*Within.*] Jerry, Jerry Sneak!

Sneak. Gad's my life, sure as a gun that's her voice! Look ye, brother, I don't choose to breed a disturbance in another body's house; but as soon as ever I get home——

Bruin. Now is your time.

Sneak. No, no; it would not be decent.

Mrs Sneak. [*Within.*] Jerry, Jerry!

Sneak. I come, lovy! But you will be sure to stand by me?

Bruin. Trot, nincompoop.

Sneak. Well, if I don't—I wish——

Mrs Sneak. [*Within.*] Where is this lazy puppy a-loitering?

Sneak. I come, chuck, as fast as I can—Good lord, what a sad life do I lead! [*Exit.*

Bruin. *Ex quovis lingno*: who can make a silk purse of a sow's ear?

Enter SIR JACOB.

Sir Jac. Come, son Bruin, we are all seated at table, man; we have but just time for a snack: the candidates are near upon coming.

Bruin. A poor, paltry, mean-spirited—Damn it! before I would submit to such a——

Sir Jac. Come, come, man; don't be so crusty.

Bruin. I follow, sir Jacob. Damme, when once a man gives up his prerogative, he might as well give up—But, however, it is no bread and butter of mine——Jerry, Jerry! Zounds, I would jerry and jerk her, too!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Continues.*

SIR JACOB, MAJOR STURGEON, MR *and* MRS BRUIN, MR *and* MRS SNEAK, *discovered.*

Mrs Sneak. INDEED, major, not a grain of curiosity! Can it be thought that we, who have a lord-mayor's show every year, can take any pleasure in this?

Maj. In time of war, madam, these meetings are not amiss; I fancy a man might pick up a good many recruits; but in these piping times of peace, I wonder sir Jacob permits it.

Sir Jac. It would, major, cost me my popularity to quash it: the common people are fond of their customs, as the barons were of their *Magna Charta*: besides, my tenants make some little advantage.

Enter ROGER.

Rog. Crispin Heel-tap, with the electors, are set out from the Adam and Eve.

Sir Jac. Gad so, then they will soon be upon us: Come, good folks, the balcony will give us the best view of the whole. Major, you will take the ladies under protection?

Maj. Sir Jacob, I am upon guard.

Sir Jac. I can tell you, this Heel-tap is an arch rascal ——

Sneak. And plays the best game at cribbage in the whole corporation of Garrat.

Mrs Sneak. That puppy will always be a chattering.

Sneak. Nay, I did but——

Mrs Sneak. Hold your tongue, or I'll send you home in an instant——

Sir Jac. Prithee, daughter! You may to-day, major, meet with something that will put you in mind of more important transactions.

Maj. Perhaps so.

Sir Jac. Lack-a-day, all men are alike; their principles exactly the same: for though art and education may disguise or polish the manner, the same motives and springs are universally planted.

Maj. Indeed!

Sir Jac. Why, in this mob, this group of plebeians, you will meet with materials to make a Sylla, a Cicero, a Solon, or a Cæsar: let them but change conditions, and the world's great lord had been but the best wrestler on the green.

Maj. Ay, ay; I could have told these things formerly; but since I have been in the army, I have entirely neglected the classes.

Mob. [*Without.*] Huzza!

Sir Jac. But the heroes are at hand, major.

Sneak. Father sir Jacob, might we not have a tankard of stingo above?

Sir Jac. By all means.

Sneak. D'ye hear, Roger?

[*Exeunt into the balcony.*

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter MOB, *with* HEEL-TAP *at their head; some crying, A Goose! others, A Mug! others, A Primmer!*

Heel. Silence there—Silence!

1st Mob. Hear neighbour Heel-tap!

2d Mob. Ay, ay, hear Crispin.

3d Mob. Ay, ay, hear him, hear Crispin: he will put us into the model of the thing at once.

Heel. Why, then, silence, I say!

All. Silence!

Heel. Silence, and let us proceed, neighbours, with all the decency and confusion usual upon these occasions.

1st Mob. Ay, ay, there is no doing without that.

All. No, no, no!

Heel. Silence, then, and keep the peace; what, is there no respect paid to authority? am not I the returning officer?

All. Ay, ay, ay.

Heel. Chosen by yourselves, and approved of by sir Jacob?

All. True, true!

Heel. Well, then, be silent and civil: Stand back there, that gentleman without a shirt, and make room for your betters. Where is Simon Snuffle the sexton?

Snuf. Here.

Heel. Let him come forward; we appoint him our secretary: for Simon is a scollard, and can read written hand; and so let him be respected accordingly.

3d Mob. Room for master Snuffle!

Heel. Here, stand by me; and let us, neighbours, proceed to open the premunire of the thing: but, first, your reverence to the lord of the manor; a long life and a merry one to our landlord sir Jacob! huzza!

Mob. Huzza!

Sneak. How fares it, honest Crispin?

Heel. Servant, Mr Sneak. Let us now open the premunire of the thing, which I shall do briefly, with all the loquacity possible; that is, in a medium way; which, that we may the better do it, let the secretary read the names of the candidates, and what they say for themselves; and then we shall know what to say of them.—Master Snuffle, begin.

Snuf. 'To the worthy inhabitants of the ancient corporation of Garrat: Gentlemen, your 'votes and interest are humbly requested in favour of Timothy Goose, to succeed your late 'worthy mayor, Mr Richard Dripping, in the 'said office, he being——

Heel. This Goose is but a kind of gosling, a sort of sneaking scoundrel: who is he?

Snuf. A journeyman tailor from Putney.

Heel. A journeyman tailor! A rascal, has he the impudence to transpire to be mayor?—— D'ye consider, neighbours, the weight of this office? Why, it is a burthen for the back of a porter? and can you think that this cross-legged cabbage-eating son of a cucumber, this whey-faced ninny, who is but the ninth part of a man, has strength to support it?

1*st Mob.* No Goose! no Goose!

2*d Mob.* A Goose!

Heel. Hold your hissing, and proceed to the next.

Snuf. 'Your votes are desired for Mathew Mug.'

1*st Mob.* A Mug! a Mug!

Heel. Oh, oh! what, you are all ready to have a touch of the tankard? But fair and soft, good neighbours: let us taste this Master Mug before we swallow him; and unless I am mistaken, you will find him a damned bitter draught.

1*st Mob.* A Mug! a Mug!

2*d Mob.* Hear him; hear master Heel-tap.

1*st Mob.* A Mug! a Mug!

Heel. Hark'e, you fellow with your mouth full of Mug, let me ask you a question—bring him forward—Pray, is not this Mathew Mug a victualler?

3*d Mob.* I believe he may.

Heel. And lives at the sign of the Adam and Eve?

3*d Mob.* I believe he may.

Heel. Now, answer upon your honour, and as you are a gentleman, what is the present price of a quart of home-brewed at the Adam and Eve?

3*d Mob.* I don't know.

Heel. You lie, sirrah; an't it a groat?

3*d Mob.* I believe it may.

Heel. Oh, may be so. Now, neighbours, here's a pretty rascal! this same Mug, because, d'ye see, state-affairs would not go glibly without laying a farthing a quart upon ale, this scoundrel, not contented to take things is a medium way, has had the impudence to raise it a penny.

Mob. No Mug! no Mug!

Heel. So, I thought I should crack Mr Mug. Come, proceed to the next, Simon.

Snuf. The next upon the list is Peter Primmer the schoolmaster.

Heel. Ay, neighbours, and a sufficient man, let me tell you. Master Primmer is the man for my money; a man of learning, that can lay down the law; why, adzooks, he is wise enough to puzzle the parson; and, then, how you have heard him oration at the Adam and Eve of a Saturday night, about Russia and Prussia. Ecod, George Gage the exciseman is nothing at all to un.

4*th Mob.* A Primmer!

Heel. Ah! if the folks above did but know him! why, lads, he will make us all statesmen in time.

2*d Mob.* Indeed!

Heel. Why, he swears as how all the miscarriages are owing to the great people's not learning to read.

3*d Mob.* Indeed!

Heel. For, says Peter, says he, if they would but once submit to be learned by me, there is no knowing to what a pitch the nation might rise.

1*st Mob.* Ay, I wish they would.

Sneak. Crispin, what, is Peter Primmer a candidate?

Heel. He is, Mr Sneak.

Sneak. Lord! I know him, mun! as well as my mother: why, I used to go to his lectures to Pewterer's-hall along with deputy Firkin.

Heel. Like enough.

Sneak. Ods me, brother Bruin, can you tell what is become of my vife?

Bruin. She is gone off with the major.

Sneak. Mayhap to take a walk in the garden; I will go and take a peep at what they are doing. [*Exit* SNEAK.

Mob. [*without.*] Huzza!

Heel. Gadso! the candidates are coming! Come, neighbours, range yourselves to the right and left, that you may be convassed in order! let us see who comes first.

1*st Mob.* Master Mug.

Heel. Now, neighbours, have a good caution that this Master Mug does not cajole you; he is a damned palavering fellow.

Enter MATTHEW MUG.

Mug. Gentlemen, I am the lowest of your slaves: Mr Heel-tap, have the honour of kissing your hand.

Heel. There! did not I tell you?

Mug. Ah, my very good friend, I hope your father is well?

1st Mob. He is dead.

Mug. So he is. Mr Grub, if my wishes prevail, your very good wife is in health?

2d Mob. Wife! I never was married.

Mug. No more you were. Well, neighbours and friends—Ah! what, honest Dick Bennet!

3d Mob. My name is Gregory Gubbins.

Mug. You are right, it is so; and how fares it with good Mr Gubbins?

3d Mob. Pretty tight, Mr Mug.

Mug. I am exceedingly happy to hear it.

4th Mob. Hark'e, Master Mug?

Mug. Your pleasure, my very dear friend?

4th Mob. Why, as how and concerning our young one at home.

Mug. Right, she is a prodigious promising girl.

4th Mob. Girl! Zooks, why 'tis a boy!

Mug. True, a fine boy! I love and honour the child.

4th Mob. Nay 'tis none such a child; but you promised to get un a place.

Mug. A place! what place?

4th Mob. Why, a gentleman's service, you know.

Mug. It is done; it is fixed; it is settled.

4th Mob. And when is the lad to take on?

Mug. He must go in a fortnight at farthest.

4th Mob. And is it a pretty goodish birth, Master Mug?

Mug. The best in the world; head-butler to Lady Barbara Bounce.

4th Mob. A lady!

Mug. The wages are not much, but the vails are amazing.

4th Mob. Barbara Bunch?

Mug. Yes; she has routs on Tuesdays and Sundays, and he gathers the tables; only he finds candles, cards, coffee, and tea.

4th Mob. Is lady Barbara's work pretty tight?

Mug. As good as a sinecure; he only writes cards to her company, and dresses his mistress's hair.

4th Mob. Hair! Zounds! Why, Jack was bred to dressing of horses.

Mug. True; but he is suffered to do that by deputy.

4th Mob. May be so.

Mug. It is so. Hark'e, dear Heel-tap, who is this fellow? I should remember his face.

Heel. And don't you?

Mug. Not I, I profess.

Heel. No!

Mug. No.

Heel. Well said, Master Mug! but come, time wears: have you any thing more to say to the corporation?

Mug. Gentlemen of the corporation of Garratt——

Heel. Now twig him; now mind him: mark how he hawls his muscles about.

Mug. The honour I this day solicit, will be to me the most honourable honour that can be conferred; and should I succeed, you, gentlemen, may depend on my using my utmost endeavours to promote the good of the borough; for which purpose, the encouragement of your trade and manufactories will most principally tend. Garratt, it must be owned, is an inland town, and has not, like Wansworth, and Fulham, and Putney, the glorious advantage of a port; but what nature has denied, industry may supply; cabbage, carrots, and colly-flowers, may be deemed, at present, your staple commodities; but why should not your commerce be extended? Were I, gentlemen, worthy to advise, I should recommend the opening a new branch of trade; sparagrass, gentlemen, the manufacturing of sparagrass. Battersea, I own, gentlemen, bears at present the bell; but where lies the fault? In ourselves, gentlemen: let us, gentlemen, but exert our natural strength, and I will take upon me to say, that a hundred of grass from the corporation of Garratt will, in a short time, at the London market, be held at least as an equivalent to a Battersea bundle.

Mob. A Mug! A Mug!

Heel. Damn the fellow, what a tongue he has! I must step in, or he will carry the day. Hark'e, Master Mug?

Mug. Your pleasure, my very good friend?

Heel. No flummering me: I tell thee, Matthew, 'twon't do: why, as to this article of ale, here, how comes it about, that you have raised it a penny a quart?

Mug. A word in your ear, Crispin; you and your friends shall have it at threepence.

Heel. What, sirrah, do you offer a bribe? d'ye dare to corrupt me, you scoundrel?

Mug. Gentlemen——

Heel. Hear, neighbours! the fellow has offered to bate a penny a quart, if so be as how I would be consenting to impose upon you.

Mob. No Mug! No Mug!

Mug. Neighbours, friends——

Mob. No Mug!

Mug. I believe this is the first borough that ever was lost by the returning officer's refusing a bribe. [*Exit* MUG.

2d Mob. Let us go and pull down his sign.

Heel. Hold, hold, no riot: but, that we may not give Mug time to pervert the votes, and carry the day, let us proceed to the election.

Mob. Agreed! Agreed!

[*Exit* HEEL. *and* MOB.

SIR JACOB, BRUIN, *and* WIFE, *come from the balcony.*

Sir Jac. Well, son Bruin, how d'ye relish the corporation of Garratt?

Bruin. Why, look'e, sir Jacob, my way is always to speak what I think: I don't approve on't at all.

Mrs Bruin. No!

Sir Jac. And what's your objection?

Bruin. Why, I was never over-fond of your May games; besides, corporations are too serious things; they are edge-tools, sir Jacob.

Sir Jac. That they are frequently tools, I can readily grant: but I never heard much of their edge.

Mrs Bruin. Well, now, I protest I am pleased with it mightily.

Bruin. And who the devil doubts it? You women folks are easily pleased.

Mrs Bruin. Well, I like it so well, that I hope to see one every year.

Bruin. Do you? why, then, you will be damnably bit! you may take your leave, I can tell you; for this is the last you shall see.

Sir Jac. Fie, Mr Bruin! how can you be such a bear? Is that a manner of treating your wife?

Bruin. What, I suppose you would have me such a snivelling sot as your son-in-law Sneak, to truckle and cringe, to fetch and to——

Enter SNEAK *in a violent hurry.*

Sneak. Where's brother Bruin! O Lord, brother, I have such a dismal story to tell you!

Bruin. What's the matter?

Sneak. Why, you know I went into the garden to look for my vife and the major, and there I hunted and hunted as sharp as if it had been for one of my own minickens; but the deuce a major or madam could I see: at last a thought came into my head, to look for them up in the summer-house.

Bruin. And there you found them?

Sneak. I'll tell you: the door was locked; and then I looked through the key-hole; and there, Lord a mercy upon us!—[*Whispers.*]—as sure as a gun!

Bruin. Indeed! Zounds, why did not you break open the door?

Sneak. I durst not: What, would you have me set my wit to a soldier? I warrant the major would have knocked me down with one of his boots; for I could see they were both of them off.

Bruin. Very well! Pretty doings! You see, sir Jacob, these are the fruits of indulgence. You may call me bear, but your daughter shall never make me a beast. [*Mob huzzas.*

Sir Jac. Hey-day! What, is the election over already?

Enter CRISPIN, *&c.*

Heel. Where is master Sneak?

Sneak. Here, Crispin.

Heel. The ancient corporation of Garratt, in consideration of your great parts and abilities, and out of respect to their landlord sir Jacob, have unanimously chosen you mayor.

Sneak. Me! Huzza! Good Lord! who would have thought it? But how came Mr Primmer to lose it?

Heel. Why, Phill Fleam had told the electors, that Master Primmer was an Irishman; and so they would none of them give their vote for a foreigner.

Sneak. So, then, I have it for certain! huzza! now, brother Bruin, you shall see how I'll manage my madam: Gad, I'll make her know I am a man of authority; she shan't think to bullock and domineer over me.

Bruin. Now for it, Sneak! the enemy's at hand!

Sneak. You promise to stand by me, brother Bruin?

Bruin. Tooth and nail.

Sneak. Then now for it! I am ready, let her come when she will.

Enter MRS SNEAK.

Mrs Sneak. Where is the puppy?

Sneak. Yes, yes; she is axing for me.

Mrs Sneak. So, sot! what, is this true that I hear?

Sneak. May be 'tis, may be 'tant: I don't choose to trust my affairs with a voman. Is that right, brother Bruin?

Bruin. Fine! don't bate her an inch.

Sneak. Stand by me.

Mrs Sneak. Hey-day! I am amazed! Why, what is the meaning of this?

Sneak. The meaning is plain, that I am grown a man, and vil do what I please, without being accountable to nobody.

Mrs Sneak. Why, the fellow is surely bewitched!

Sneak. No, I am unwitched, and that you shall know to your cost; and since you provoke me, I will tell you a bit of my mind: what, I am the husband, I hope?

Bruin. That's right; at her again!

Sneak. Yes; and you shan't think to hector and domineer over me as you have done; for I'll go to the club when I please, and stay out as late as I list, and row in a boat to Putney on Sundays, and visit my friends at Vitsontide, and keep the key of the till, and help myself at table to what wittles I like; and I'll have a bit of the brown.

Bruin. Bravo, brother! Sneak, the day's your own!

Sneak. An't it! Vhy, I did not think it vas in me: shall I tell her all I know?

Bruin. Every thing; you see she is struck dumb.

Sneak. As an oyster. Besides, madam, I have something furder to tell you: ecod, if some folks go into gardens with majors, mayhap other peo-

ple may go into garrets with maids——There, I gave it her home, brother Bruin.

Mrs Sneak. Why, doodle, jackanapes, hark'e, who am I?

Sneak. Come, don't go to call names: Am I! why, my wife, and I am your master.

Mrs Sneak. My masser! you paultry, puddling puppy; you sneaking, shabby, scrubby, snivelling whelp!

Sneak. Brother Bruin, don't let her come near me!

Mrs Sneak. Have I, sirrah, demeaned myself to wed such a thing, such a reptile as thee! have I not made myself a by-word to all my acquaintance! don't all the world cry, Lord, who would have thought Miss Molly Jollup to be married to Sneak! to take up at last with such a noodle as he!

Sneak. Ay, and glad enough you could catch me: You know you was pretty near your last legs.

Mrs Sneak. Was there ever such a confident cur? My last legs! Why, all the country knows, I could have picked and choosed where I would: did not I refuse squire Ap-Griffith from Wales? Did not counsellor Crab come a-courting a twelvemonth? Did not Mr Wort, the great brewer of Brentford, make an offer that I should keep my post-chav?

Sneak. Nay, brother Bruin, she has had wery good proffers, that is certain.

Mrs Sneak. My last legs! But I can rein my passion no longer; let me get at the villain.

Bruin. O fie, sister Sneak!

Sneak. Hold her fast.

Mrs Sneak. Mr Bruin, unhand me! what, it is you that have stirred up these coals, then? He is set on by you to abuse me?

Bruin. Not I; I would only have a man to behave like a man.

Mrs Sneak. What, and are you to teach him, I warrant?—but here comes the major.

Enter MAJOR STURGEON.

Oh major! Such a riot and rumpus! Like a man indeed! I wish people would mind their own affairs, and not meddle with matters that does not concern them: but all in good time; I shall one day catch him alone, when he has not his bullies to back him.

Sneak. Adod, that's true, brother Bruin; what shall I do when she has me at home, and nobody by but ourselves?

Bruin. If you get her once under, you may do with her whatever you will.

Maj. Look'e, Master Bruin, I don't know how this behaviour may suit with a citizen; but were you an officer, and major Sturgeon upon your court-martial——

Bruin. What then?

Maj. Then! why, then you would be broke.

Bruin. Broke! and for what?

Maj. What? read the articles of war: but these things are out of your spear; points of honour are for the sons of the sword.

Sneak. Honour! If you come to that, where was your honour when you got my vife in the garden?

Maj. Now, sir Jacob, this is the curse of our cloth: all suspected for the faults of a few.

Sneak. Ay, and not without reason: I heard of your tricks at the king of Bohemy, when you was campaining about; I did. Father sir Jacob, he is as wicious as an old ram.

Maj. Stop whilst you are safe, Master Sneak: for the sake of your amiable lady, I pardon what is past—But for you——

Bruin. Well!

Maj. Dread the whole force of my fury.

Bruin. Why, look'e, major Sturgeon, I don't much care for your poppers and sharps, because why, they are out of my way; but if you will doff with your boots, and box a couple of bouts—

Maj. Box! Box! Blades, bullets, bagshot!

Mrs Sneak. Not for the world, my dear major! O risk not so precious a life! Ungrateful wretches! And is this the reward for all the great feats he has done? After all his marchings, his sousings, his sweatings, his swimmings; must his dear blood be spilt by a broker?

Maj. Be satisfied, sweet Mrs Sneak; these little fracases we soldiers are subject to; trifles, bagatnailes, Mrs Sneak. But that matters may be conducted in a military manner, I will get our chaplin to pen me a challenge. Expect to hear from my adjutant.

Mrs Sneak. Major! sir Jacob! what, are you all leagued against his dear——a man! Yes; a very manly action indeed, to set married people a quarrelling, and ferment a difference between husband and wife: if you were a man, you would not stand by and see a poor woman beat and abused by a brute, you would not.

Sneak. Oh, Lord, I can hold out no longer! Why, brother Bruin, you have set her a veeping: my life, my lovy, don't veep: did I ever think I should have made my Molly veep!

Mrs Sneak. Last legs, you lubberly——

[*Strikes him.*

Sir Jac. Oh fie, Molly!

Mrs Sneak. What, are you leagued against me, sir Jacob?

Sir Jac. Prithee, don't expose yourself before the whole parish. But what has been the occasion of this?

Mrs Sneak. Why, has not he gone and made himself the fool of the fair? Mayor of Garratt indeed! Ecod, I could trample him under my feet.

Sneak. Nay, why should you grudge me my purfarment?

Mrs Sneak. Did you ever hear such an oaf? Why, thee wilt be pointed at wherever thee goest. Look'e, Jerry, mind what I say; go, get 'em p

choose somebody else, or never come near me again.

Sneak. What shall I do, father sir Jacob?

Sir Jac. Nay, daughter, you take this thing in too serious a light; my honest neighbours thought to compliment me: but come, we'll settle the business at once. Neighbours, my son Sneak being seldom amongst us, the duty will never be done; so we will get our honest friend Heel-tap to execute the office: he is, I think, every way qualified.

Mob. A Heel-tap!

Heel. What d'ye mean? As Master Jeremy's deputy?

Sir Jac. Ay, ay; his *locum tenens.*

Sneak. Do, Crispin; do, be my *locum tenens.*

Heel. Give me your hand, Master Sneak; and to oblige you, I will be the *locum tenens.*

Sir Jac. So, that is settled: but now to heal the other breach: Come, major, the gentlemen of your cloth seldom bear malice; let me interpose between you and my son.

Maj. Your son-in-law, sir Jacob, does deserve a castigation; but on recollection, a cit would but sully my arms. I forgive him.

Sir Jac. That's right: as a token of amity, and to celebrate our feast, let us call in the fiddles. Now, if the major had but his shoes, he might join in a country dance.

Maj. Sir Jacob, no shoes; a major must be never out of his boots; always ready for action. Mrs Sneak will find me lightsome enough.

Sneak. What, are all the vomen engaged? why, then, my *locum tenens* and I will jigg together.—Forget and forgive, major.

Maj. Freely.
Nor be it said, that after all my toil,
I stained my regimentals by a broil.
To you I dedicate boots, sword, and shield,

Sir Jac. As harmless in the chamber as the field.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE PATRON.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	MEN.
Sir Thomas Lofty, *the Patron.*	Mr Puff, *a publisher.*
Sir Peter Pepperpot, *a West Indian epicure.*	Mr Staytape, *a taylor.*
Dick Bever, *in love with* Juliet.	Robin, } *servants to* Sir Thomas Lofty.
Frank Younger, *his friend.*	John, }
Sir Roger Dowlas, *an East India proprietor; remarkable for stuttering in his speech.*	*Two Blacks.*
Mr Rust, *an absurd old antiquarian.*	WOMEN.
Mr Dactyl, *a poet.*	Miss Juliet, *niece to* Sir Thomas Lofty.

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter Bever *and* Younger.

Young. No, Dick, you must pardon me.

Bev. Nay, but to satisfy your curiosity:

Young. I tell you, I have not a jot.

Bev. Why, then, to gratify me.

Young. At rather too great an expence.

Bev. To a fellow of your observation and turn, I should think, now, such a scene a most delicate treat.

Young. Delicate! Palling, nauseous, to a dreadful degree. To a lover, indeed, the charms of the niece may palliate the uncle's fulsome formality.

Bev. The uncle! ay; but then, you know, he is only one of the group.

Young. That's true; but the figures are all finished alike. A *maniere*, a tiresome sameness, throughout.

Bev. There you will excuse me; I am sure there is no want of variety.

Young. No! then let us have a detail. Come, Dick, give us a bill of the play.

Bev. First, you know, there's Juliet's uncle.

Young. What, sir Thomas Lofty! the modern Midas, or, rather (as fifty dedications will tell you), the Pollio, the Atticus, the patron of genius, the protector of arts, the paragon of poets, decider of merit, chief justice of taste, and sworn appraiser to Apollo and the tuneful Nine. Ha, ha! Oh, the tedious, insipid, insufferable coxcomb!

Bev. Nay, now, Frank, you are too extravagant. He is universally allowed to have tast[e] sharp-judging Adriel, the muse's friend, himself a muse.

Young. Taste! by whom? underling bards that he feeds, and broken booksellers that he bribes. Look ye, Dick; what raptures you please when Miss Lofty is your theme, but expect no quarter for the rest of the family. I tell thee, once for all, Lofty is a rank impostor, the Bufo of an illiberal, mercenary tribe: he has neither genius to create, judgment to distinguish, nor generosity to reward; his wealth has gained him flattery from the indigent, and the haughty insolence of his pretence, admiration from the ignorant. *Voila le portrait de votre oncle!* Now on to the text.

Bev. The ingenious and erudite Mr Rust.

Young. What, old Martin the medal-monger?

Bev. The same, and my rival in Juliet.

Young. Rival! what, Rust? why, she's too modern for him, by a couple of centuries. Martin! why he likes no heads but upon coins. Married! the mummy! Why, 'tis not above a fortnight ago, that I saw him making love to the figure without a nose in Somerset-gardens: I caught him stroaking the marble plaits of her gown, and asked him if he was not ashamed to take such liberties with ladies in public?

Bev. What an inconstant old scoundrel it is!

Young. Oh, a Dorimont. But how came this about? what could occasion the change? was it in the power of flesh and blood to seduce this adorer of virtù from his marble and porphyry?

Bev. Juliet has done it; and, what will surprise you, his taste was a bawd to the business.

Young. Prithee explain.

Bev. Juliet met him last week at her uncle's: he was a little pleased with the Greek of her profile; but, on a closer inquiry, he found the turn-up of her nose to exactly resemble the bust of the princess Pompæa.

Young. The chaste moiety of the amiable Nero?

Bev. The same.

Young. Oh, the deuce! then your business was done in an instant?

Bev. Immediately. In favour of the tip, he offered *chart blanche* for the rest of the figure; which, as you may suppose, was instantly caught at.

Young. Doubtless. But who have we here?

Bev. This is one of Lofty's companions, a West Indian, of an overgrown fortune. He saves me the trouble of a portrait. This is sir Peter Pepperpot.

Enter SIR PETER PEPPERPOT, *and two Blacks.*

Sir Pet. Careless scoundrels! hark'e, rascals! I'll banish you home, you dogs! you shall back, and broil in the sun. Mr Bever, your humble! Sir, I am your entirely devoted.

Bev. You seem moved! what has been the matter, sir Peter?

Sir Pet. Matter! why, I am invited to dinner on a barbicu, and the villains have forgot my bottle of chian.

Young. Unpardonable.

Sir Pet. Ay, this country has spoiled them; this same Christening will ruin the colonies.—Well, dear Bever, rare news, boy! our fleet is arrived from the West.

Bev. It is?

Sir Pet. Ay, lad, and a glorious cargo of turtle! It was lucky I went to Brighthelmstone; I nicked the time to a hair; thin as a lath, and a stomach as sharp as a shark's: never was in finer condition for feeding.

Bev. Have you a large importation, sir Peter?

Sir Pet. Nine; but seven in excellent order: the captain assures me they greatly gained ground on the voyage.

Bev. How do you dispose of them?

Sir Pet. Four to Cornhill, three to Almack's, and the two sickly ones I shall send to my borough in Yorkshire.

Young. Ay! what, have the provincials a relish for turtle?

Sir Pet. Sir, it is amazing how this country improves in turtle and turnpikes; to which (give me leave to say) we, from our part of the world, have not a little contributed. Why formerly, sir, a brace of bucks on the mayor's annual day was thought a pretty moderate blessing. But we, sir, have polished their palates: Why, sir, not the meanest member in my corporation but can distinguish the pash from the pee.

Young. Indeed!

Sir Pet. Ay, and sever the green from the shell with the skill of the ablest anatomist.

Young. And are they fond of it?

Sir Pet. Oh, that the consumption will tell you. The stated allowance is six pounds to an alderman, and five to each their wives.

Bev. A plentiful provision.

Sir Pet. But there was never known any waste. The mayor, recorder, and rector, are permitted to eat as much as they please.

Young. The entertainment is pretty expensive?

Sir Pet. Land-carriage and all. But I contrived to smuggle the last that I sent them.

Bev. Smuggle! I don't understand you.

Sir Pet. Why, sir, the rascally coachman had always charged me five pounds for the carriage. Damned dear! Now, my cook going at the same time into the country, I made him clap a capuchin upon the turtle, and for thirty shillings put him an inside passenger in the Doncaster fly.

Young. A happy expedient!

Bev. Oh, sir Peter has infinite humour.

Sir Pet. Yes; but the frolic had like to have proved fatal.

Young. How so?

Sir Pet. The maid at the Rummer, at Hatfield, popped her head into the coach, to know if the company would have any breakfast: ecod,

the turtle, sir, laid hold of her nose, and slapped her face with his fins, till the poor devil fell into a fit. Ha, ha, ha!

Young. Oh, an absolute Rabelais!

Bev. What, I reckon, sir Peter, you are going to the squire?

Sir Pet. Yes; I extremely admire sir Thomas: you know this is his day of assembly; I suppose you will be there? I can tell you, you are a wonderful favourite.

Bev. Am I?

Sir Pet. He says your natural genius is fine; and, when polished by his cultivation, will surprise and astonish the world.

Bev. I hope, sir, I shall have your voice with the public?

Sir Pet. Mine! O fie, Mr Bever!

Bev. Come, come, you are no inconsiderable patron.

Sir Pet. He, he, he! Can't say but I love to encourage the arts.

Bev. And have contributed largely yourself.

Young. What, is sir Peter an author?

Sir Pet. O fie! what, me? a mere dabbler; have blotted my fingers, 'tis true. Some sonnets, that have not been thought wanting in salt.

Bev. And your epigrams.

Sir Pet. Not entirely without point.

Bev. But come, sir Peter, the love of the arts is not the sole cause of your visits to the house you are going to.

Sir Pet. I don't understand you.

Bev. Miss Juliet, the niece.

Sir Pet. O fie! what chance have I there? Indeed, if lady Pepperpot should happen to pop off——

Bev. I don't know that. You are, sir Peter, a dangerous man: and, were I a father or uncle, I should not be a little shy of your visits.

Sir Pet. Psha! dear Bever, you banter!

Bev. And (unless I am extremely out in my guess), that lady——

Sir Pet. Hey! what, what, dear Bever?

Bev. But if you should betray me——

Sir Pet. May I never eat a bit of green fat if I do!

Bev. Hints have been dropped.

Sir Pet. The devil! Come a little this way.

Bev. Well-made: not robust and gigantic, 'tis true; but extremely genteel.

Sir Pet. Indeed!

Bev. Features, not entirely regular; but marking, with an air now, superior; greatly above the —you understand me?

Sir Pet. Perfectly. Something noble; expressive of—fashion.

Bev. Right.

Sir Pet. Yes, I have been frequently told so.

Bev. Not an absolute wit; but something infinitely better: an *enjouement*, a spirit, a——

Sir Pet. Gaiety—I was ever so from a child.

Bev. In short, your dress, address, with a thousand other particulars, that at present I can't recollect.

Sir Pet. Why, dear Bever, to tell thee the truth, I have always admired Miss Juliet, and a delicate creature she is: sweet as a sugarcane, straight as a bamboo, and her teeth as white as a negro's.

Bev. Poetic, but true. Now only conceive, sir Peter, such a plantation of perfections to be devoured by that caterpillar, Rust.

Sir Pet. A liquorish grub! Are pine-apples for such muckworms as he? I'll send him a jar of citrons and ginger, and poison the pipkin.

Bev. No, no.

Sir Pet. Or invite him to dinner, and mix rat's-bane along with his curry.

Bev. Not so precipitate: I think we may defeat him without any danger.

Sir Pet. How, how?

Bev. I have a thought—but we must settle the plan with the lady. Could not you give her the hint that I should be glad to see her a moment.

Sir Pet. I'll do it directly.

Bev. But don't let sir Thomas perceive you.

Sir Pet. Never fear. You'll follow?

Bev. The instant I have settled matters with her; but fix the old fellow, so that she may not be missed.

Sir Pet. I'll nail him, I warrant; I have his opinion to beg on this manuscript.

Bev. Your own?

Sir Pet. No.

Bev. Oh, oh! what, something new from the doctor, your chaplain?

Sir Pet. He! no, no. O Lord, he's eloped!

Bev. How!

Sir Pet. Gone. You know he was to dedicate his volume of fables to me: so I gave him thirty pounds to get my arms engraved, to prefix (by way of print) to the frontispiece; and, O grief of griefs! the doctor has moved off with the money. I'll send you Miss Juliet. [*Exit.*

Bev. There, now, is a special protector! the arts, I think, can't but flourish under such a Mæcenas.

Young. Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool.

Bev. True; but then, to justify the dispensation,

From hence the poor are clothed, the hungry fed;
Fortunes to booksellers, to authors bread.

Young. The distribution is, I own, a little unequal; and here comes a melancholy instance—poor Dick Dactyl, and his publisher, Puff.

Enter DACTYL *and* PUFF.

Puff. Why, then, Mr Dactyl, carry them to somebody else; there are people enough in the trade. But I wonder you would meddle with poetry; you know it rarely pays for the paper.

Dac. And how can one help it, Mr Puff? genius impels; and when a man is once listed in the service of the muses——

Puff. Why, let him give them warning as soon as he can. A pretty sort of service indeed, where there are neither wages nor vails! The muses! And what, I suppose this is the livery they give! Gadzooks, I had rather be a waiter at Ranelagh.

Bev. The poet and publisher are at variance! What is the matter, Mr Dactyl?

Dac. As Gad shall judge me, Mr Bever, as pretty a poem, and so polite! not a mortal can take any offence; all full of panegyric and praise.

Puff. A fine character he gives of his works! No offence! the greatest in the world, Mr Dactyl. Panegyric and praise! and what will that do with the public? why, who the devil will give money to be told, that Mr Such-a-one is a wiser or better man than himself? No, no; 'tis quite and clean out of nature. A good sousing satire now, well powdered with personal pepper, and seasoned with the spirit of party; that demolishes a conspicuous character, and sinks him below our own level; there, there, we are pleased! there we chuckle and grin, and toss the half-crowns on the counter!

Dac. Yes, and so get cropped for a libel.

Puff. Cropped! ay, and the luckiest thing that can happen to you. Why, I would not give twopence for an author that is afraid of his ears. Writing, writing, is (as I may say), Mr Dactyl, a sort of warfare, where none can be victor that is the least afraid of a scar. Why, zooks, sir, I never got salt to my porridge till I mounted at the royal exchange!

Bev. Indeed!

Puff. No, no: that was the making of me. Then my name made a noise in the world. Talk of forked hills, and of Helicon! romantic and fabulous stuff! The true Castalian stream is a shower of eggs, and a pillory the poet's Parnassus.

Dac. Ay, to you, indeed, it may answer; but what do we get for our pains?

Puff. Why, what the deuce would you get! food, fire, and fame. Why, you would not grow fat! a corpulent poet is a monster, a prodigy! No, no: spare diet is a spur to the fancy; high feeding would but founder your Pegasus.

Dac. Why, you impudent, illiterate rascal! who is it you dare treat in this manner?

Puff. Hey-day! what is the matter now?

Dac. And is this the return for all the obligations you owe me? But no matter—the world, the world shall know what you are, and how you have used me.

Puff. Do your worst; I despise you.

Dac. They shall be told from what a dunghill you sprang. Gentlemen, if there be faith in a sinner, that fellow owes every shilling to me.

Puff. To thee!

Dac. Ay, sirrah, to me. In what kind of way did I find you? then, where and what was your state? Gentlemen, his shop was a shed in Moorfields; his kitchen, a broken pipkin of charcoal; and his bed-chamber under the counter.

Puff. I never was fond of expence; I ever minded my trade.

Dac. Your trade! and pray with what stock did you trade? I can give you the catalogue; I believe it won't overburden my memory. Two odd volumes of Swift; the life of Moll Flanders, with cuts: the Five Senses, printed and coloured by Overton; a few classics, thumbed and blotted by the boys of the Charter-house; with the trial of Dr Sacheverel.

Puff. Malice!

Dac. Then, sirrah, I gave you my Canning; it was she first set you afloat.

Puff. A grub!

Dac. And it is not only my writings: you know, sirrah, what you owe to my physic.

Bev. How! a physician?

Dac. Yes, Mr Bever; physic and poetry: Apollo is the patron of both: *Opiferque per orbem dicor.*

Puff. His physic!

Dac. My physic! ay, my physic. Why, dare you deny it, you rascal! What, have you forgot my powders for flatulent crudities?

Puff. No.

Dac. My cosmetic lozenge and sugar-plumbs?

Puff. No.

Dac. My coral for cutting of teeth, my potions, my lotions, my pregnancy-drops, with my paste for superfluous hairs?

Puff. No, no; have you done?

Dac. No, no, no! but I believe this will suffice for the present.

Puff. Now, would not any mortal believe that I owed my all to this fellow?

Bev. Why, indeed, Mr Puff, the balance does seem in his favour.

Puff. In his favour! why you don't give any credit to him? a reptile, a bug, that owes his very being to me.

Dac. I, I, I!

Puff. You, you! What, I suppose you forget your garret in Wine-office-court, when you furnished paragraphs for the Farthing-post at twelvepence a dozen?

Dac. Fiction!

Puff. Then did not I get you made collector of casualties to the Whitehall and St James's? but that post your laziness lost you. Gentlemen, he never brought them a robbery till the highwayman was going to be hanged; a birth, till the christening was over; nor a death, till the hatchment was up.

Dac. Mighty well!

Puff. And now, because the fellow has got a little in flesh, by being puff to the play-house this

winter, (to which, by the by, I got him appointed) he is as proud and as vain as Voltaire. But I shall soon have him under! the vacation will come.

Dac. Let it.

Puff. Then I shall have him sneaking and cringing, hanging about me, and begging a bit of translation.

Dac. I beg, I, for translation!

Puff. No, no, not a line; not if you would do it for twopence a sheet. No boiled beef and carrot at mornings; no more cold pudding and porter. You may take your leave of my shop.

Dac. Your shop! then at parting I will leave you a legacy.

Bev. O fie, Mr Dactyl!

Puff. Let him alone.

Dac. Pray, gentlemen, let me do myself justice!

Bev. Younger, restrain the publisher's fire.

Young. Fie, gentlemen! such an illiberal combat! it is a scandal to the republic of letters.

Bev. Mr Dactyl, an old man, a mechanic, beneath——

Dac. Sir, I am calm; that thought has restored me. To your insignificancy you are indebted for safety. But what my generosity has saved, my pen shall destroy.

Puff. Then you must get somebody to mend it.

Dac. Adieu!

Puff. Farewell! [*Exeunt severally.*

Bev. Ha, ha, ha! come, let us along to the squire.

Blockheads, with reason, wicked wits abhor;
But dunce with dunce is barbarous civil war.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter BEVER *and* YOUNGER.

Young. Poor Dactyl! and dwells such mighty rage in little men? I hope there is little danger of bloodshed?

Bev. Oh, not in the least: the *gens vatum*, the nation of poets, though an irritable, are yet a placable people. Their mutual interests will soon bring them together again.

Young. But shall not we be late? The critical senate is by this time assembled.

Bev. I warrant you, frequent and full, where
Stately Bufo, puffed by every quill,
Sits like Apollo on his forked hill.
But you know I must wait for Miss Lofty; I am now totally directed by her; she gives me the key to all sir Thomas's foibles, and prescribes the most proper method to feed them; but what good purpose that will produce——

Young. Is she clever, adroit?

Bev. Doubtless. I like your asking the question of me.

Young. Then pay an implicit obedience: the ladies, in these cases, generally know what they are about. The door opens.

Bev. It is Juliet, and with her old Rust.—— You know the knight, so no introduction is wanted.—[*Exit* YOUNGER.]——I should be glad to hear this reverend piece of lumber make love; the courtship must certainly be curious. Good manners, stand by; by your leave, I will listen a little. [BEVER *retires.*

Enter JULIET *and* RUST.

Jul. And your collection is large?

Rust. Most curious and capital. When, madam, will you give me leave to add your charms to the catalogue?

Jul. O dear! Mr Rust, I shall but disgrace it. Besides, sir, when I marry, I am resolved to have my husband all to myself; now, for the possession of your heart I shall have too many competitors.

Rust. How, madam? were Prometheus alive, and would animate the Helen that stands in my hall, she should not cost me a sigh.

Jul. Ay, sir, there lies my greatest misfortune. Had I only those who are alive to contend with my assiduity, affection, cares, and caresses, I might secure my conquest, though that would be difficult; for, I am convinced, were you, Mr Rust, put up by Prestage to auction, the Apollo Belvidere would not draw a greater number of bidders.

Rust. Would that were the case, madam, so I might be thought a proper companion to the Venus de Medicis!

Jul. The flower of rhetoric, and pink of politeness! But my fears are not confined to the living; for every nation and age, even painters and statuaries, conspire against me. Nay, when the pantheon itself, the very goddesses, rise up as my rivals, what chance has a mortal like me?——I shall certainly laugh in his face. [*Aside.*

Rust. She is a delicate subject.—Goddesses, Madam! Zooks, had you been on mount Ida when Paris decided the contest, the Cyprian queen had pleaded for the pippin in vain.

Jul. Extravagant gallantry!

Rust. In you, madam, are concentered all the beauties of the heathen mythology: the open front of Diana, the lustre of Pallas' eyes——

Jul. Oh, sir!

Rust. The chromatic music of Clio, the blooming graces of Hebe, the imperial port of queen Juno, with the delicate dimples of Venus.

Jul. I see, sir, antiquity has not engrossed all your attention: You are no novice in the nature of woman. Incense, I own, is grateful to most of my sex; but there are times when adoration may be dispensed with.

Rust. Madam!

Jul. I say, sir, when we women willingly wave our rank in the skies, and wish to be treated as mortals.

Rust. Doubtless, madam; and are you wanting in materials for that? No, madam; as in dignity you surpass the heathen divinities, so, in the charms of attraction, you beggar the queens of the earth. The whole world, at different periods, has contributed to several beauties to form you.

Jul. The deuce it has! [*Aside.*

Rus. See, there, the ripe Asiatic perfection, joined to the delicate softness of Europe! In you, madam, I burn to possess Cleopatra's alluring glances, the Greek profile of queen Clytemnestra, the Roman nose of the empress Popæa.

Jul. With the majestic march of queen Bess. Mercy on me, what a wonderful creature am I!

Rust. In short, madam, not a feature you have, but recals to my mind some trait in a medal or bust.

Jul. Indeed! why, by your account, I must be an absolute olio, a perfect salamogundy of charms.

Rust. Oh, madam, how can you demean, as I may say, undervalue——

Jul. Value! there is the thing! and to tell you the truth, Mr Rust, in that word, value, lies my greatest objection.

Rust. I don't understand you.

Jul. Why, then, I'll explain myself. It has been said, and I believe with some shadow of truth, that no man is a hero to his valet de chambre; now I am afraid, when you and I grow a little more intimate, which I suppose must be the case if you proceed on your plan, you will be horribly disappointed in your high expectations, and soon discover this Juno, this Cleopatra, and princess Popæa, to be as arrant a mortal, as madam your mother.

Rust. Madam, I, I, I—

Jul. Your patience a moment. Being, therefore, desirous to preserve your devotion, I beg, for the future, you would please to adore at a distance.

Rust. To Endymion, madam, Luna once listened.

Jul. Ay, but he was another kind of a mortal: you may do very well as a votary, but for a husband—mercy upon me!

Rust. Madam, you are not in earnest? not serious?

Jul. Not serious! Why, have you the impudence to think of marrying a goddess?

Rust. I should hope—

Jul. And what should you hope? I find your devotion resembles that of the world: when the power of sinning is over, and the sprightly first-runnings of life are racked off, you offer the vapid dregs to your deity. No, no; you may, if you please, turn monk in my service. One vow, I believe, you will observe better than most of them—chastity.

Rust. Permit me——

Jul. Or, if you must marry, take your Julia, your Portia or Flora, your Fum-Fam from China, or your Egyptian Osiris. You have long paid your addresses to them.

Rust. Marry! what, marble!

Jul. The properest wives in the world; you can't choose amiss; they will supply you with all that you want.

Rust. Your uncle has, madam, consented.

Jul. That is more than ever his niece will. Consented! and to what? to be swathed to a mouldering mummy? or be locked up like your medals, to canker and rust in a cabinet? No, no; I was made for the world, and the world shall not be robbed of its right.

Bev. Bravo, Juliet! gad, she's a fine spirited girl!

Jul. My *profile*, indeed! No, sir; when I marry, I must have a man that will meet me full face.

Rust. Might I be heard for a moment?

Jul. To what end? You say you have sir Thomas Lofty's consent; I tell you, you can never have mine. You may screen me from, or expose me to, my uncle's resentment; the choice is your own: if you lay the fault at my door, you will doubtless greatly distress me; but take the blame on yourself, and I shall own myself extremely obliged to you.

Rust. How! confess myself in the fault?

Jul. Ay; for the best thing a man can do, when he finds he can't be beloved, is to take care he is not heartily hated. There is no other alternative.

Rust. Madam, I shan't break my word with sir Thomas.

Jul. Nor I with myself. So there's an end of our conference. Sir, your very obedient.

Rust. Madam, I, I, don't—that is, let me—But no matter. Your servant. [*Exit.*

Jul. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter BEVER *from behind.*

Bev. Ha, ha, ha! Incomparable Juliet! how the old dotard trembled and tottered! he could not have been more inflamed, had he been robbed of his Otho.

Jul. Ay; was ever goddess so familiarly used? In my conscience, I began to be afraid that he would treat me as the Indians do their dirty divinities; whenever they are deaf to their prayers, they beat and abuse them.

Bev. But, after all, we are in an aukward situation.

Jul. How so?

Bev. I have my fears.

Jul. So have not I.

Bev. Your uncle has resolved that you shall be married to Rust.

Jul. Ay, he may decree; but it is I that must execute.

Bev. But suppose he has given his word?

Jul. Why, then let him recal it again.

Bev. But are you sure you shall have courage enough—

Jul. To say *no?* That requires much resolution indeed!

Bev. Then I am at the height of my hopes.

Jul. Your hopes! Your hopes and your fears are ill-founded alike.

Bev. Why, you are determined not to be his?

Jul. Well, and what then?

Bev. What then? why, then you will be mine.

Jul. Indeed! and is that the natural consequence? whoever wont be his, must be yours? Is that the logic of Oxford?

Bev. Madam I did flatter myself——

Jul. Then you did very wrong, indeed, Mr Bever; you should ever guard against flattering yourself; for, of all dangerous parasites, Self is the worst.

Bev. I am astonished!

Jul. Astonished! you are mad, I believe! Why, I have not known you above a month. It is true, my uncle says your father is his friend; your fortune, in time, will be easy; your figure is not remarkably faulty; and as to your understanding, passable enough for a young fellow, who has not seen much of the world: but when one talks of a husband—Lord, 'tis quite another sort of a—Ha, ha, ha! Poor Bever, how he stares! he stands like a statue!

Bev. Statue! Indeed, madam, I am very near petrified.

Jul. Even then, you will make as good a husband as Rust. But go, run, and join the assembly within; be attentive to every word, motion, and look of my uncle's; be dumb, when he speaks; admire all he says; laugh, when he smirks; bow, when he sneezes; In short, fawn, flatter, and cringe; don't be afraid of overloading his stomach; for the knight has a noble digestion, and you will find some there, who will keep you in countenance.

Bev. I fly. So, then, Juliet, your intention was only to try——

Jul. Don't plague me with impertinent questions; march; obey my directions. We must leave the issue to chance; a greater friend to mankind than they are willing to own. Oh, if any thing new should occur, you may come into the drawing-room for further instructions.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*A room in* SIR THOMAS LOFTY'S *house.*

SIR THOMAS, RUST, PUFF, DACTYL, *and others discovered sitting.*

Sir Tho. Nothing new to-day from Parnassus?

Dac. Not that I hear.

Sir Tho. Nothing critical, philosophical, or political?

Puff. Nothing.

Sir Tho. Then, in this disette, this dearth of invention, give me leave, gentlemen, to distribute my stores. I have here in my hand a little smart, satyrical epigram; new, and prettily pointed; in short, a production, that Martial himself would not have blushed to acknowledge.

Rust. Your own, sir Thomas?

Sir Tho. O, fie! no, sent me this morning, anonymous.

Dac. Pray, sir Thomas, let us have it!

All. By all means; by all means.

Sir Tho. [*Reads.*]

To PHILLIS.

Think'st thou, fond Phillis, Strephon told thee true,
Angels are painted fair to look like you?
Another story all the town will tell;
Phillis paints fair, to look like an an-gel.

All. Fine! fine! very fine!

Dac. Such an ease and simplicity!

Puff. The turn so unexpected and quick!

Rust. The satire so poignant!

Sir Tho. Yes, I think it possesses, in an eminent degree, the three epigramatical requisites; brevity, familiarity, and severity.

Phillis paints fair to look like an an-gel.

Dac. Happy! Is the Phillis, the subject, a secret?

Sir Tho. Oh, dear me! nothing personal; no; an impromptu; a mere *jeu d'esprit.*

Puff. Then, sir Thomas, the secret is out; it is your own.

Dac. That was obvious enough.

Puff. Who is there else could have wrote it?

Rust. True, true!

Sir Tho. The name of the author is needless. So it is an acquisition to the republic of letters, any gentleman may claim the merit that will.

Puff. What a noble contempt!

Dac. What greatness of mind!

Rust. Scipio and Lælius were the Roman Lofty's. Why, I dare believe sir Thomas has been the making of half the authors in town: he is, as I may say, the great manufacturer; the other poets are but pedlars, that live by retailing his wares.

All. Ha, ha, ha! well observed, Mr Rust!

Sir Tho. Ha, ha, ha! *Motte atque facetum*—Why, to pursue the metaphor, if sir Thomas Lofty was to call in his poetical debts, I believe there would be a good many bankrupts in the Muse's Gazette.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Tho. But, a propos, gentlemen: with regard to the eclipse: you found my calculation exact?

Dac. To a digit.

Sir Tho. Total darkness, indeed! and birds going to roost! Those philomaths, those almanack-makers are the most ignorant rascals——

Puff. It is amazing where sir Thomas Lofty stores all his knowledge.

Dac. It is wonderful how the mind of man can contain it.

Sir Tho. Why to tell you the truth, that circstance has a good deal engaged my attention; and I believe you will admit my method of solving the phenomenon philosophical and ingenious enough.

Puff. Without question.

All. Doubtless.

Sir Tho. I suppose, gentlemen, my memory, or mind, to be a chest of drawers, a kind of bureau; where, in separate cellules, my different knowledge on different subjects is stored.

Rust. A prodigious discovery!

All. Amazing!

Sir Tho. To this cabinet, volition, or will, has a key; so, when an arduous subject occurs, I unlock my bureau, pull out the particular drawer, and am supplied with what I want in an instant.

Dac. A Malbranch!

Puff. A Boyle!

All. A Locke!

Enter Servant.

Ser. Mr Bever. [*Exit.*

Sir Tho. A young gentleman from Oxford, recommended to my care by his father. The university has given him a good solid Doric foundation; and when he has receved from you a few Tuscan touches, the Ionic and Corinthian graces, I make no doubt but he will prove a Composite pillar to the republic of letters.

Enter BEVER.

This, sir, is the school, from whence so many capital masters have issued; the river that enriches the regions of science.

Dac. Of which river, sir Thomas, you are the source; here we quaff! *Et purpureo bibimus ore nectar!*

Sir Tho. *Purpureo!* Delicate, indeed, Mr Dactyl. Do you hear, Mr Bever? *Bibimus ore nectar.* You young gentlemen must be instructed to quote; nothing gives a period more spirit than a happy quotation, nor has, indeed, a finer effect at the head of an essay. Poor Dick Steel! I have obliged him with many a motto for his fugitive pieces.

Puff. Ay; and with the contents, too, or sir Richard is foully belied.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Sir Roger Dowlas.

Sir Tho. Pray, desire him to enter. [*Exit Servant.*] Sir Roger, gentlemen, is a considerable East India proprietor; and seems desirous of collecting, from this learned assembly, some rhetorical flowers, which he hopes to strew, with honour to himself and advantage to the company, at Merchant-Taylors' Hall.

Enter SIR ROGER DOWLAS.

Sir Roger, be seated. This gentleman has, in common with the greatest orator the world ever saw, a small natural infirmity; he stutters a little: but I have prescribed the same remedy that Demosthenes used, and don't despair of a radical cure. Well, sir, have you digested those general rules?

Sir Rog. Pr—ett—y well, I am obli—ged to you, sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Have you been regular in taking your tincture of sage, to give you confidence for speaking in public?

Sir Rog. Y—es, sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Did you open at the last general court?

Sir Rog. I attem—p—ted fo—ur or fi——ve times.

Sir Tho. What hindered your progress?

Sir Rog. The pe—b—bles.

Sir Tho. Oh, the pebbles in his mouth. But they are only put in to practise in private; you should take them out, when you are addressing the public.

Sir Rog. Yes; I will for the fu—ture:

Sir Tho. Well, Mr Rust, you had a *tete-a-tete* with my niece. A-propos, Mr Bever, here, offers a fine occasion for you; we shall take the liberty to trouble your Muse on their nuptials: O, Love! O, Hymen!——here prune thy purple wings; trim thy bright torch! Hey, Mr Bever?

Bev. My talents are at sir Thomas Lofty's direction; though I must despair of producing any performance worthy the attention of so complete a judge of the elegant arts.

Sir Tho. Too modest, good Mr Bever!—— Well, Mr Rust, any new acquisition, since our last meeting, to your matchless collection?

Rust. Why, sir Thomas, I have both lost and gained, since I saw you.

Sir Tho. Lost! I am sorry for that.

Rust. The curious sarcophagus, that was sent me from Naples by Signior Belloni——

Sir Tho. You mean the urn, that was supposed to contain the dust of Agrippa?

Rust. Supposed! no doubt but it did.

Sir Tho. I hope no sinister accident to that inestimable relict of Rome?

Rust. 'Tis gone.

Sir Tho. Gone! oh, illiberal! what, stolen, I suppose, by some connoiseur?

Rust. Worse, worse; a prey, a martyr to ignorance; a housemaid, that I hired last week, mistook it for a broken green chamber-pot, and sent it away in the dust cart.

Sir Tho. She merits impaling.——Oh, the Hun!

Dac. The Vandal!

All. The Visigoth!

Rust. But I have this day acquired a treasure, that will, in some measure, make me amends.

Sir Tho. Indeed! what can that be?

Puff. That must be something curious, indeed!

Rust. It has cost me infinite trouble to get it.

Dac. Great rarities are not to be had without pains.

Rust. It is three months ago, since I got the first scent of it; and I had been ever since on the hunt, but all to no purpose.

Sir Tho. I am quite upon thorns till I see it.

Rust. And yesterday, when I had given it over, when all my hopes were grown desperate, it fell into my hands by the most unexpected and wonderful accident.

Sir Tho. *Quod optanti divum promittere nemo*
Auderet, volvenda dies en attulit ultro.

Mr Bever, you mark my quotation?

Bev. Most happy. Oh, sir, nothing you say can be lost.

Rust. I have brought it here in my pocket; I am no churl; I love to pleasure my friends.

Sir Tho. You are, Mr Rust, extremely obliging.

All. Very kind, very obliging, indeed.

Rust. It was not much hurt by the fire.

Sir Tho. Very fortunate.

Rust. The edges are soiled by the link, but many of the letters are exceedingly legible.

Sir Rog. A lit—tle roo—m, if you pl—ease.

Rust. Here it is; the precious remains of the very North-Briton, that was burnt at the Royal-Exchange.

Sir Tho. Number forty-five?

Rust. The same.

Bev. You are a lucky man, Mr Rust.

Rust. I think so. But, gentlemen, I hope I need not give you a caution: hush! silence! no words on this matter.

Dac. You may depend upon us.

Rust. For as the paper has not suffered the law, I don't know whether they may not seize it again.

Sir Tho. With us you are safe, Mr Rust.—— Well, young gentleman, you see we cultivate all branches of science.

Bev. Amazing, indeed! But, when we consider you, sir Thomas, as the directing, the ruling planet, our wonder subsides in an instant.—— Science first saw the day, with Socrates in the Attic portico; her early years were spent with Tully in the Tusculan shade: but her ripe, maturer hours, she enjoys with sir Thomas Lofty, near Cavendish-square.

Sir Tho. The most classical compliment I ever received! Gentlemen, a philosophical repast attends your acceptance within. Sir Roger, you'll lead the way. [*Exeunt all but* SIR THOMAS *and* BEVER.] Mr Bever, may I beg your ear for a moment? Mr Bever, the friendship I have for your father, secured you, at first, a gracious reception from me; but what I then paid to an old obligation, is now, sir, due to your own particular merit.

Bev. I am happy, sir Thomas, if——

Sir Tho. Your patience. There is in you, Mr Bever, a fire of imagination, a quickness of apprehension, a solidity of judgment, joined to a depth of discretion, that I never yet met with in any subject at your time of life.

Bev. I hope I shall never forfeit——

Sir Tho. I am sure you never will; and to give you a convincing proof that I think so, I am now going to trust you with the most important secret of my whole life.

Bev. Your confidence does me great honour.

Sir Tho. But this must be on a certain condition.

Bev. Name it.

Sir Tho. That you give me your solemn promise to comply with one request I shall make you.

Bev. There is nothing sir Thomas Lofty can ask, that I shall not cheerfully grant.

Sir Tho. Nay, in fact, it will be serving yourself.

Bev. I want no such inducement.

Sir Tho. Enough. But we can't be too private. [*Shuts the door.*] Sit you down. Your Christian name, I think, is——

Bev. Richard.

Sir Tho. True; the same as your father's: come, let us be familiar. It is, I think, dear Dick, acknowledged, that the English have reached the highest pitch of perfection in every department of writing but one—the dramatic?

Bev. Why, the French critics are a little severe.

Sir Tho. And with reason. Now to rescue our credit, and, at the same time give my country a model, [*Shews a manuscript.*] see here.

Bev. A play!

Sir Tho. A *chef d'œuvre.*

Bev. Your own?

Sir Tho. Speak lower. I am the author.

Bev. Nay, then there can be no doubt of its merit.

Sir Tho. I think not. You will be charmed with the subject.

Bev. What is it, sir Thomas?

Sir Tho. I shall surprise you. The story of Robinson Crusoe. Are not you struck?

Bev. Most prodigiously!

Sir Tho. Yes; I knew the very title would hit you. You will find the whole fable is finely conducted; and the character of Friday, *quam ab incepto*, nobly supported throughout.

Bev. A pretty difficult task.

Sir Tho. True; that was not a bow for a boy. The piece has long been in rehearsal at Drury-Lane play-house, and this night is to make its appearance.

Bev. To-night?

Sir Tho. This night.

Bev. I will attend, and engage all my friends to support it.

Sir Tho. That is not my purpose; the piece will want no such assistance.

Bev. I beg pardon.

Sir Tho. The manager of that house (who, you know, is a writer himself), finding all the anonymous things he produced (indeed some of them wretched enough, and very unworthy of him) placed to his account by the public, is determined to exhibit no more without knowing the name of the author.

Bev. A reasonable caution.

Sir Tho. Now, upon my promise (for I appear to patronise the play) to announce the author before the curtain draws up, Robinson Crusoe is advertised for this evening.

Bev. Oh, then you will acknowledge the piece to be yours?

Sir Tho. No.

Bev. How, then?

Sir Tho. My design is to give it to you.

Bev. To me?

Sir Tho. To you.

Bev. What! me the author of Robinson Crusoe?

Sir Tho. Ay.

Bev. Lord, sir Thomas, it will never gain credit! so complete a production the work of a stripling! Besides, sir, as the merit is yours, why rob yourself of the glory?

Sir Tho. I am entirely indifferent to that.

Bev. Then, why take the trouble?

Sir Tho. My fondness for letters, and love of my country. Besides, dear Dick, though the *pauci et selecti*, the chosen few, know the full value of a performance like this, yet the ignorant, the profane (by much the majority) will be apt to think it an occupation ill suited to my time of life.

Bev. Their censure is praise.

Sir Tho. Doubtless. But, indeed, my principal motive is my friendship for you. You are now a candidate for literary honours, and I am determined to fix your fame on an immoveable basis.

Bev. You are most excessively kind; but there is something so disingenuous in stealing reputation from another man.

Sir Tho. Idle punctilio!

Bev. It puts me so in mind of the daw in the fable.

Sir Tho. Come, come, dear Dick, I won't suffer your modesty to murder your fame. But the company will suspect something; we will join them, and proclaim you the author. There, keep the copy; to you I consign it for ever; it shall be a secret to latest posterity. You will be smothered with praise by our friends; they shall all in their bark to the play-house; and there,

Attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter BEVER, *reading.*

Bever. So ends the first act. Come, now for the second. 'Act the second, showing,'—the coxcomb has prefaced every act with an argument, too, in humble imitation, I warrant, of Mons. Diderot——'Showing the fatal effects of disobedience to parents:' with, I suppose, the diverting scene of a gibbet; an entertaining subject for comedy! And the blockhead is as prolix! every scene as long as an homily! Let us see how does this end? 'Exit Crusoe, and enter some savages dancing a saraband.' There is no bearing this abominable trash.

Enter JULIET.

So, madam; thanks to your advice and direction, I am got into a fine situation.

Jul. What is the matter now, Mr Bever?

Bev. The Robinson Crusoe.

Jul. Oh, the play, that is to be acted to-night. How secret you were! Who, in the world, would have guessed you was the author?

Bev. Me, madam!

Jul. Your title is odd; but, to a genius, every subject is good.

Bev. You are inclined to be pleasant.

Jul. Within, they have been all prodigious loud in the praise of your piece; but I think my uncle rather more eager than any.

Bev. He has reason; for fatherly fondness goes far.

Jul. I don't understand you.

Bev. You don't?

Jul. No.

Bev. Nay, Juliet, this is too much: you know it is none of my play.

Jul. Whose then?

Bev. Your uncle's.

Jul. My uncle's! Then how, in the name of wonder, came you to adopt it?

Bev. At his earnest request. I may be a fool; but remember, madam, you are the cause.

Jul. This is strange; but I can't conceive what his motive could be.

Bev. His motive is obvious enough; to screen himself from the infamy of being the author.

Jul. What, is it bad, then?

Bev. Bad! most infernal!

Jul. And you have consented to own it?

Bev. Why, what could I do? He in a manner compelled me.

Jul. I am extremely glad of it.

Bev. Glad of it! Why, I tell you 'tis the most dull, tedious, melancholy——

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. The most flat piece of frippery that ever Grub-street produced.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. It will be damned before the third act.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. And I shall be hooted and pointed at wherever I go.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. So much the better! Zounds! So I suppose you would say, if I was going to be hanged. Do you call this a mark of your friendship?

Jul. Ah, Bever, Bever! You are a miserable politician: do you know, now, that this is the luckiest incident that ever occurred?

Bev. Indeed!

Jul. It could not have been better laid, had we planned it ourselves.

Bev. You will pardon my want of conception; but these are riddles.

Jul. That at present I have not time to explain. But what makes you loitering here? Past six o'clock, as I live! Why, your play is begun; run, run to the house. Was ever author so little anxious for the fate of his piece!

Bev. My piece!

Jul. Sir Thomas! I know him by his walk.—Fly! and pray all the way for the fail of your play. And, do you hear? if you find the audience too indulgent, inclined to be milky, rather than fail, squeeze in an acid yourself. Oh, Mr Bever, at your return, let me see you before you go to my uncle; that is, if you have the good luck to be damned.

Bev. You need not doubt that. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR THOMAS LOFTY.

Sir Tho. So, Juliet; was not that Mr Bever?

Jul. Yes, sir.

Sir Tho. He is rather tardy; by this time his cause is come on. And how is the young gentleman affected? For this is a trying occasion.

Jul. He seems pretty certain, sir.

Sir Tho. Indeed I think he has very little reason for fear. I confess I admire the piece, and feel as much for its fate, as if the work was my own.

Jul. That I most sincerely believe. I wonder, sir, you did not choose to be present.

Sir Tho. Better not. My affections are strong, Juliet, and my nerves but tenderly strung; however, intelligent people are planted, who will bring me, every act, a faithful account of the process.

Jul. That will answer your purpose as well.

Sir Tho. Indeed I am passionately fond of the arts, and therefore can't help——did not somebody knock? No. My good girl, will you step and take care that, when any body comes, the servants may not be out of the way?—[*Exit* JULIET.]—Five-and-thirty minutes past six; by this time the first act must be over: John will be presently here. I think it can't fail: yet there is so much whim and caprice in the public opinion, that——this young man is unknown; they'll give him no credit. I had better have owned it myself: reputation goes a great way in these matters; people are afraid to find fault; they are cautious in censuring the works of a man, who—Hush! that's he: no; 'tis only the shutters. After all, I think I have chosen the best way; for if it succeeds to the degree I expect, it will be easy to circulate the real name of the author; if it fails, I am concealed; my fame suffers no—There he is—[*Loud knocking.*]—I can't conceive what kept him so long.

Enter JOHN.

So, John; well; and—but you have been a monstrous while.

John. Sir, I was wedged so close in the pit, that I could scarcely get out.

Sir Tho. The house was full, then?

John. As an egg, sir.

Sir Tho. That's right. Well, John, and did matters go swimmingly? Hey?

John. Exceedingly well, sir.

Sir Tho. Exceedingly well. I don't doubt it. What, vast clapping and roars of applause, I suppose?

John. Very well, sir.

Sir Tho. Very well, sir! You are damned costive, I think. But did not the pit and boxes thunder again?

John. I can't say there was over-much thunder.

Sir Tho. No! Oh, attentive, I reckon? Ay, attention; that is the true, solid, substantial applause. All else may be purchased; hands move as they are bid: but when the audience is hushed, still, afraid of losing a word, then——

John. Yes; they were very quiet, indeed, sir.

Sir Tho. I like them the better, John; a strong mark of their great sensibility. Did you see Robin?

John. Yes, sir; he'll be here in a trice; I left him listening at the back of the boxes, and charged him to make all the haste home that he could.

Sir Tho. That's right, John; very well; you

account pleases me much, honest John.—[*Exit* JOHN.]—No, I did not expect the first act would produce any prodigious effect. And, after all, the first act is but a mere introduction: just opens the business, the plot, and gives a little insight into the characters; so that, if you but engage and interest the house, it is as much as the best writer can flatt—[*Knocking without.*]—Gadso! What, Robin already? Why, the fellow has the feet of a Mercury.

Enter ROBIN.

Well, Robin, and what news do you bring?

Rob. I, I, I——

Sir Tho. Stop, Robin, and recover your breath.—Now, Robin.

Rob. There has been a woundy uproar below.

Sir Tho. An uproar! What, at the play-house?

Rob. Ay.

Sir Tho. At what?

Rob. I don't know: belike, at the words the play-folk were talking.

Sir Tho. At the players? How can that be? Oh, now I begin to perceive. Poor fellow, he knows but little of plays: What, Robin, I suppose, hallooing, and clapping, and knocking of sticks?

Rob. Hallooing! Ay, and hooting too.

Sir Tho. And hooting?

Rob. Ay, and hissing to boot.

Sir Tho. Hissing! You must be mistaken?

Rob. By the mass, but I am not!

Sir Tho. Impossible! Oh, most likely some drunken disorderly fellows, that were disturbing the house, and interrupting the play; too common a case; the people were right, they deserved a rebuke. Did not you hear them cry, Out, out, out!

Rob. Noa; that was not the cry; 'twas Off, off, off!

Sir Tho. That was a whimsical noise. Zounds! that must be the players. Did you observe nothing else?

Rob. Belike the quarrel first began between the gentry and a black-a-moor man.

Sir Tho. With Friday! The public taste is debauched; honest nature is too plain and simple for their vitiated palates!

Enter JULIET.

Juliet, Robin brings me the strangest account! some little disturbance; but I suppose it was soon settled again. Oh, but here comes Mr Staytape, my tailor; he is a rational being; we shall be able to make something of him.

Enter STAYTAPE.

So, Staytape; what, is the third act over already?

Stay. Over, sir! no; nor never will be.

Sir Tho. What do you mean?

Stay. Cut short.

Sir Tho. I don't comprehend you.

Stay. Why, sir, the poet has made a mistake in measuring the taste of the town: the goods, it seems, did not fit; so they returned them upon the gentleman's hands.

Sir Tho. Rot your affectation and quaintness, you puppy! Speak plain.

Stay. Why, then, sir, Robinson Crusoe is dead.

Sir Tho. Dead!

Stay. Ay; and what is worse, will never rise any more. You will soon have all the particulars; for there were four or five of your friends close at my heels.

Sir Tho. Staytape, Juliet, run and stop them! Say I am gone out; I am sick; I am engaged: but whatever you do, be sure you don't let Bever come in. Secure of the victory, I invited them to the celebr——

Stay. Sir, they are here.

Sir Tho. Confound——

Enter PUFF, DACTYL, *and* RUST.

Rust. Ay, truly, Mr Puff, this is but a bitter beginning: then the young man must turn himself to some other trade.

Puff. Servant, sir Thomas; I suppose you have heard the news of——

Sir Tho. Yes, yes; I have been told it before.

Dac. I confess, I did not suspect it; but there is no knowing what effect these things will have, till they come on the stage.

Rust. For my part, I don't know much of these matters; but a couple of gentlemen near me, who seemed sagacious enough too, declared, that it was the vilest stuff they ever had heard, and wondered the players would act it.

Dac. Yes: I don't remember to have seen a more general dislike.

Puff. I was thinking to ask you, sir Thomas, for your interest with Mr Bever, about buying the copy: but now no mortal would read it.—Lord, sir, it would not pay for paper and printing.

Rust. I remember Kennet, in his Roman Antiquities, mentions a play of Terence's, Mr Dactyl, that was terribly treated; but that he attributes to the people's fondness for certain *funambuli*, or rope-dancers; but I have not lately heard of any famous tumblers in town: sir Thomas, have you?

Sir Tho. How should I? Do you suppose I trouble my head about tumblers?

Rust. Nay, I did not.

Bev. [*Speaking without.*]—Not to be spoke with! Don't tell me, sir; he must, he shall.

Sir Tho. Mr Bever's voice! If he is admitted in his present disposition, the whole secret will certainly out. Gentlemen, some affairs, of a most interesting nature, make it impossible for

me to have the honour of your company to-night; therefore, I beg you would be so good as to——

Rust. Affairs! no bad news? I hope Miss Julé is well?

Sir Tho. Very well; but I am most exceedingly——

Rust. I shall only just stay to see Mr Bever: poor lad! he will be most horribly down in the mouth! a little comfort won't come amiss.

Sir Tho. Mr Bever, sir! you won't see him here.

Rust. Not here! why, I thought I heard his voice but just now.

Sir Tho. You are mistaken, Mr Rust; but—

Rust. May be so; then we will go. Sir Thomas, my compliments of condolence, if you please, to the poet?

Sir Tho. Ay, ay.

Dac. And mine; for I suppose we shan't see him soon.

Puff. Poor gentleman! I warrant he won't show his head for these six months.

Rust. Ay, ay; indeed, I am very sorry for him; so tell him, sir.

Dac. and Puff. So are we.

Rust. Sir Thomas, your servant. Come, gentlemen. By all this confusion in sir Thomas, there must be something more in the wind than I know; but I will watch, I am resolved.

[*Exeunt.*

Bev. [*Without.*] Rascals, stand by! I must, I will see him.

Enter BEVER.

So, sir; this is delicate treatment, after all I have suffered!

Sir Tho. Mr Bever, I hope you don't—that is——

Bev. Well, sir Thomas Lofty, what think you now of your Robinson Crusoe? a pretty performance!

Sir Tho. Think, Mr Bever! I think the public are blockheads! a tasteless, stupid, ignorant tribe! and a man of genius deserves to be damned, who writes any thing for them. But courage, dear Dick! the principals will give you what the people refuse; the closet will do you that justice the stage has denied: Print your play.

Bev. My play! Zounds, sir, 'tis your own!

Sir Tho. Speak lower, dear Dick! be moderate, my good dear lad!

Bev. Oh, sir Thomas, you may be easy enough; you are safe and secure, removed far from that precipice that has dashed me to pieces.

Sir Tho. Dear Dick, don't believe it will hurt you: the critics, the real judges, will discover in that piece such excellent talents——

Bev. No, sir Thomas, no! I shall neither flatter you nor myself; I have acquired a right to speak what I think. Your play, sir, is a wretched performance; and, in this opinion, all mankind are united.

Sir Tho. May be not.

Bev. If your piece had been greatly received, I would have declared sir Thomas Lofty the author; if coldly, I would have owned it myself; but such disgraceful, such contemptible treatment! I own the burden is too heavy for me; so, sir, you must bear it yourself.

Sir Tho. Me, dear Dick! what, to become ridiculous in the decline of my life! to destroy, in one hour, the fame that forty years has been building! that was the prop, the support of my age! Can you be cruel enough to desire it?

Bev. Zounds, sir! and why must I be your crutch? Would you have me become a voluntary victim? No, sir, this cause does not merit a martyrdom.

Sir Tho. I own myself greatly obliged; but persevere, dear Dick, persevere! you have time to recover your fame; I beg it, with tears in my eyes. Another play will——

Bev. No, sir Thomas; I have done with the stage—the muses and I meet no more.

Sir Tho. Nay, there are various roads open in life.

Bev. Not one where your piece won't pursue me: If I go to the bar, the ghost of this cursed comedy will follow, and hunt me in Westminster-hall. Nay, when I die, it will stick to my memory, and I shall be handed down to posterity with the author of *Love in a Hollow Tree.*

Sir Tho. Then marry: You are a pretty smart figure, and your poetical talents——

Bev. And what fair would admit of my suit, or family wish to receive me? Make the case your own, sir Thomas; would you?

Sir Tho. With infinite pleasure!

Bev. Then give me your niece; her hands shall seal up my lips.

Sir Tho. What, Juliet? Willingly. But, are you serious? Do you really admire the girl?

Bev. Beyond what words can express. It was by her advice I consented to father your play.

Sir Tho. What, is Juliet apprized? Here, Robin, John, run and call my niece hither this moment. That giddy baggage will blab all in an instant.

Bev. You are mistaken; she is wiser than you are aware of.

Enter JULIET.

Sir Tho. Oh, Juliet, you know what has happened?

Jul. I do, sir.

Sir Tho. Have you revealed this unfortunate secret?

Jul. To no mortal, sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Come, give me your hand. Mr Bever, child, for my sake, has renounced the stage, and

the whole republic of letters; in return, I owe him your hand.

Jul. My hand! what, to a poet hooted, hissed, and exploded! You must pardon me, sir.

Sir Tho. Juliet, a trifle! The most they can say of him is, that he is a little wanting in wit; and he has so many brother writers to keep him in countenance, that, now-a-days, that is no reflection at all.

Jul. Then, sir, your engagement to Mr Rust.

Sir Tho. I have found out the rascal: he has been more impertinently severe on my play than all the rest put together; so that I am determined he shall be none of the man.

Enter RUST.

Rust. Are you so, sir? what, then, I am to be sacrificed, in order to preserve the secret, that you are a blockhead? but you are out in your politics; before night, it shall be known in all the coffee-houses in town.

Sir Tho. For Heaven's sake, Mr Rust!—

Rust. And to-morrow I will paragraph you in every newspaper; you shall no longer impose on the world: I will unmask you: the lion's skin shall hide you no longer.

Sir Tho. Juliet! Mr Bever! what can I do?

Bev. Sir Thomas, let me manage this matter. Hark'e, old gentleman, a word in your ear? you remember what you have in your pocket?

Rust. Hey! how! what!

Bev. The curiosity that has cost you so much pains.

Rust. What, my Æneas! my precious relict of Troy!

Bev. You must give up that, or the lady.

Jul. How, Mr Bever?

Bev. Never fear; I am sure of my man.

Rust. Let me consider—As to the girl, girls are plenty enough; I can marry when I will: But my paper, my phœnix, that springs fresh from the flames, that can never be matched—Take her.

Bev. And as you love your own secret, be careful of ours.

Rust. I am dumb.

Sir Tho. Now, Juliet.

Jul. You join me, sir, to an unfortunate bard; but, to procure your peace——

Sir Tho. You oblige me for ever. Now the secret dies with us four. My fault. I owe him much.

Be it your care to show it:
And bless the man, though I have damned the poet.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

MIDAS.

THE AUTHOR

ANONYMOUS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GODS.

JUPITER.
APOLLO.
PAN.
MARS.
BACCHUS.
MERCURY.
CUPID.

GODDESSES.

VESTA.
MINERVA.
VENUS.
BELLONA.
LUNA.
HEBE.
JUNO.

MORTALS.

MEN

MIDAS, *a country justice.*
DAMÆTAS, *a swain.*
SILENO, *an old shepherd.*

WOMEN.

MYSIS, *wife to* SILENO.
DAPHNE, NYSA, *daughters to* SILENO.

Scene—Arcadia.

ACT. I.

SCENE I.

The curtain rising, discovers the heathen deities, seated amidst the clouds, in full council; they address JUPITER *in chorus, accompanied by all the instruments.*

Chorus of all the gods.

JOVE, in his chair,
Of the sky lord may'r,
With his nods
Men and gods
Keeps in awe;
When he winks,
Heaven shrinks;
When he speaks,
Hell squeaks;
Earth's globe is but his taw.
Cock of the school,
He bears despotic rule;

His word,
Though absurd,
Must be law.
Even Fate,
Though so great,
Must not prate;
His bald pate
Jove would cuff,
He's so bluff,
For a straw.
Cow'd deities,
Like mice in cheese,
To stir must cease
Or gnaw.

Jup. [*Rising.*] Immortals, you have heard your plaintiff sovereign,
And culprit Sol's high crimes. Shall we, who govern,
Brook spies upon us? Shall Apollo trample
On our commands? We'll make him an example!
As for you, Juno, curb your prying temper, or
We'll make you, to your cost, know—we're your emperor.
Juno. I'll take the law. [*To* JUP.] My proctor, with a summons,
Shall cite you, sir, t' appear at Doctor's Commons.
Jup. Let him—but first I'll chase from heaven yon varlet!
Juno. What, for detecting you and your vile harlot!

AIR.

Think not, lewd Jove,
Thus to wrong my chaste love;
For, spite of your rakehelly godhead,
By day and by night,
Juno will have her right,
Nor be of dues nuptial defrauded.

I'll ferrit the haunts
Of your female gallants;
In vain you in darkness enclose them;
Your favourite jades,
I'll plunge to the shades,
Or into cows metamorphose them.

Jup. Peace, termagant!—I swear by Styx, our thunder
Shall hurl him to the earth—Nay, never wonder,
I've sworn it, gods.
Apollo. Hold, hold! have patience,
Papa—No bowels for your own relations?

AIR.

Be by your friends advised,
Too harsh, too hasty dad!
Maugre your bolts, and wise head,
The world will think you mad.

What worse can Bacchus teach men,
His roaring bucks, when drunk,
Than break the lamps, beat watchmen,
And stagger to some punk?

Jup. You saucy scoundrel!—there, sir—Come, Disorder!
Down, Phœbus, down to earth, we'll hear no farther,
Roll, thunders, roll! blue lightnings flash about him,
The blab shall find our sky can do without him.

[*Thunder and lightning.* JUPITER *darts a bolt at him, he falls—*JUPITER *re-assumes his throne, and the gods all ascend together, singing the initial chorus.*

Jove, in his chair, &c.

SCENE II.—*A champaign country, with a distant village; violent storm of thunder and lightning. A shepherd, sleeping in the field, is roused by it, and runs away frightened, leaving his cloak, hat, and guitar, behind him.* APOLLO, *as cast from heaven, falls to the earth, with a rude shock, and lies for a while stunned; at length he begins to move, rises, advances, and, looking forward, speaks; after which, enters to him* SILENO.

Apollo. Zooks! what a crush! a pretty decent tumble!
Kind usage, Mr Jove—sweet sir, your humble.
Well, down I am;—no bones broke, though sore pepper'd—
Here doom'd to stay.—What can I do? turn shepherd—— [*Puts on the cloak, &c.*
A lucky thought!—In this disguise, Apollo
No more, but Pol the swain, some flock I'll follow.
Nor doubt I, with my voice, guitar, and person,
Among the nymphs to kick up some diversion.
Sil. Whom have we here? a sightly clown! —and sturdy;
Hum! plays, I see, upon the hurdy-gurdy.
Seems out of place—a stranger—all in tatters;
I'll hire him—he'll divert my wife and daughters.
—Whence, and what art thou, boy?
Pol. An orphan lad, sir!
Pol is my name;—a shepherd once my dad, sir!
I' th' upper parts here—though not born to serving,
I'll now take on, for faith I'm almost starving.
Sil. You've drawn a prize i' th' lottery.——So have I, too;
Why,—I'm the master you could best apply to.

AIR.

Since you mean to hire for service,
Come with me, you jolly dog;
You can help to bring home harvest,
'Tend the sheep, and feed the hog.
Fa la la!

With three crowns, your standing wages,
You shall daintily be fed;
Bacon, beans, salt beef, cabbages,
Butter-milk, and oaten-bread.
Fa la la!

Come strike hands, you'll live in clover,
When we get you once at home;
And when daily labour's over,
We'll all dance to your strum strum.
Fa la la!

Pol. I strike hands, I take your offer,
Farther on I may fare worse;
Zooks, I can no longer suffer
Hungry guts, and empty purse.
Fa la la!

Sil. Do, strike hands; 'tis kind I offer;
Pol. I strike hands, and take your offer;
Sil. Farther seeking you'll fare worse;
Pol. Farther on I may fare worse.
Sil. Pity such a lad should suffer,
Pol. Zooks, I can no longer suffer,
Sil. Hungry guts, and empty purse.
Pol. Hungry guts, and empty purse.
Fa la la!
[*Exeunt, dancing and singing.*

SCENE III.—SILENO'S *farm house.*

Enter DAPHNE *and* NYSA, MYSIS *following behind.*

Daph. But, Nysa, how goes on squire Midas' courtship?
Nysa. Your sweet Damætas, pimp to his great worship,
Brought me from him a purse;—but the conditions—
I've cur'd him, I believe, of such commissions.
Daph. The moon-calf! This must blast him with my father.
Nysa. Right. So we're rid of the two frights together.
Both. Ha! ha! ha!—Ha! ha! ha!
Mysis. Heyday! what mare's nest's found? ——For ever grinning?
Ye rantipoles!—is't thus you mind your spinning?

AIR.

Girls are known
To mischief prone,
If ever they be idle.
Who would rear
Two daughters fair,
Must hold a steady bridle:
For here they skip,
And there they trip,
And this and that way sidle.
Giddy maids,
Poor silly jades,
All after men are gadding:
They flirt pell-mell,
Their train to swell,
To coxcomb, coxcomb adding:
To ev'ry fop
They're cook-a-hoop,
And set their mothers madding.

Enter SILENO, *introducing* POL.

Sil. Now, dame and girls, no more let's hear you grumble
At too hard toil;—I chanc'd, just now, to stumble
On this stout drudge—and hir'd him—fit for labour.
To 'em, lad—then he can play, and sing, and caper.
Mys. Fine rubbish to bring home! a strolling thrummer!
[*To* POL.] What art thou good for? speak, thou ragged mummer?
Nysa. Mother, for shame!——
Mys. Peace, saucebox, or I'll maul you!
Pol. Goody, my strength and parts you undervalue,
For his or your work, I'm brisk and handy.
Daph. A sad cheat else——
Mys. What you, you jack-a-dandy!

AIR.

Pray, goody, please to moderate the rancour of your tongue:
Why flash those sparks of fury from your eyes?
Remember, when the judgment's weak, the prejudice is strong.
A stranger why will you despise?
Ply me,
Try me,
Prove, ere you deny me:
If you cast me
Off, you blast me,
Never more to rise.

Mys. Sirrah! this insolence deserves a drubbing.
Nysa. With what sweet temper he bears all her snubbing! [*Aside.*
Sil. Oons! no more words.——Go, boy, and get your dinner.

Sil. Fie! why so cross-grain'd to a young beginner?
Nysa. So modest!
Daph. So genteel!
Sil. [*To* MYSIS.] Not pert, nor lumpish.
Mys. Would he were hanged!
Nysa. and Daph. La! mother, why so frumpish?

AIR.

Nysa: Mamma, how can you be so ill-natur'd,
To the gentle, handsome swain?
Daph. To a lad, so limb'd, so featur'd,
Sure 'tis cruel to give pain.
Sure 'tis cruel, &c.
Mys. Girls, for you my fears perplex me,
I'm alarm'd on your account:
Sil. Wife, in vain you teize and vex me,
I will rule, depend upon't.
Nysa. Ah! ah!
Daph. Mamma!
Nysa and Daph. Mamma, how can you be so ill-natur'd, Ah, ah, to a lad so limb'd and featur'd?
Nysa and Daph. To the gentle, handsome swain, Sure 'tis cruel to give pain;
Nysa and Daph. Sure 'tis cruel to give pain, To the gentle, handsome swain.
Mys. Girls, for you my fears perplex me,
I'm alarm'd on your account.
Sil. Wife, in vain you teize and vex me;
I will rule, depend upon't.
Nysa. Mamma!
Mys. Psha! psha!
Daph. Papa!
Sil. Ah! ah!
Daph. Sil. Nysa. Mamma, how can you be so ill-natur'd? Psha, psha, you must not be so ill-natur'd; Ah, ah! to a lad so limb'd, so featur'd?
Daph. Sil. To the gentle, handsome swain. He's a gentle, handsome swain.
Nysa. Mys. Sure 'tis cruel to give pain. 'Tis my pleasure to give pain.
Daph. Sil. Sure 'tis cruel to give pain. He's a gentle, handsome swain.
Nysa. Mys. To the gentle, handsome swain. To your odious, fav'rite swain.

SCENE IV.

Enter MIDAS *and* DAMÆTAS.

Mid. Nysa, you say, refus'd the guineas British?
Dam. Ah! please your worship—she is wondrous skittish.
Mid. I'll have her, cost what 'twill. Odsbobs! —I'll force her.
Dam. The halter!——
Mid. As for madam, I'll divorce her!
Some favoured lout incog our bliss opposes.
Dam. Aye, Pol, the hind, puts out of joint our noses.
Mid. I've heard of that Pol's tricks, of—his sly tampering,
To fling poor Pan, but I'll soon send him scampering.
'Sblood! I'll commit him—drive him to the gallows!
Where is old Pan?
Dam. Tippling, sir, at the ale-house.
Mid. Run, fetch him—we shall hit on some expedient.
To rout this Pol.
Dam. I fly; [*Going, returns.*] sir, your obedient. [*Exit.*

What boots my being 'squire,
Justice of peace, and quorum;
Church-warden, knight o' the shire,
And Custos Rotolorum;
If saucy little Nysa's heart rebellious,
My 'squireship slights, and hankers after fellows?

AIR.

Shall a paltry clown, not fit to wipe my shoes,
Dare my amours to cross?
Shall a peasant minx, when Justice Midas woos,
Her nose up at him toss?
No: I'll kidnap——then possess her:
I'll sell her Pol a slave, get mundungus in exchange;
So glut to the height of pleasure,
My love and my revenge.
No: I'll kidnap, &c. [*Exit.*

SCENE V.

PAN *is discovered sitting at a table, with a tankard, pipes and tobacco, before him; his bagpipes lying by him.*

AIR.

Jupiter wenches and drinks,
He rules the roast in the sky;
Yet he's a fool if he thinks,
That he's as happy as I;
Juno rates him,
And grates him,
And leads his highness a weary life;

I have my lass,
And my glass,
And stroll a batchelor's merry life.
Let him fluster,
And bluster,
Yet cringe to his harridan's furbelow;
To my fair tulips,
I glew lips,
And clink the cannikin here below.

Enter DAMÆTAS.

Dam. There sits the old soaker——his pate troubling little
How the world wags: so he gets drink and victle.
Hoa, master Pan!—Gad, you've trod on a thistle!
You may pack up your all, sir, and go whistle.
The wenches have turned tail—to yon buck ranter:
Tickled by his guitar, they scorn your chanter.

AIR.

All around the maypole, how they trot,
Hot
Pot,
And good ale have got;
Routing,
Shouting,
At you flouting,
Fleering,
Jeering,
And what not.
There is old Sileno frisks like a mad
Lad,
Glad
To see us sad;
Capering,
Vapouring;
While Pol, scraping,
Coaxes
The lasses
As he did the dad.

Enter MYSIS.

Mys. O Pan! the devil to pay—both my sluts frantic!
Both in their tantrums, for you capering antic.
But, I'll go seek them all; and if I find them,
I'll drive them as if Old Nick were behind them.
[*Going.*

Pan. Soa, soa—don't flounce;
Avast—disguise your fury.
Pol, we shall trounce;
Midas is judge and jury.

AIR.

Mys. Sure I shall run with vexation distracted,
To see my purposes thus counteracted!
This way or that way, or which way soever,
All things run contrary to my endeavour.
Daughters projecting
Their ruin and shame,
Fathers neglecting
The care of their fame;
Nursing in bosom a treacherous viper;
Here's a fine dance—but 'tis he pays the piper. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*A wood and lawn, near* SILENO'S *farm, flocks grazing at a distance: a tender slow symphony.*

DAPHNE *crosses melancholic and silent;* NYSA *watching her: Then* DAPHNE *returns running.*

Nys. O ho! is it so?—Miss Daphne in the dumps?
Mum—snug's the word—I'll lead her such a dance
Shall make her stir her stumps.
To all her secret haunts,
Like her shadow, I'll follow and watch her:
And, faith, mamma shall hear on't if I catch her.
[*Retires.*

Daph. La! how my heart goes pit-a-pat! what thumping
E'er since my father brought us home this bumpkin.

AIR.

He's as tight a lad to see to,
As e'er stept in leather shoe,
And, what's better, he'll love me, too,
And to him I'll prove true blue.

Though my sister casts a hawk's eye,
I defy what she can do,
He o'erlooked the little doxy,
I'm the girl he means to woo.

Hither I stole out to meet him,
He'll, no doubt, my steps pursue;
If the youth prove true, I'll fit him;
If he's false—I'll fit him, too.

Enter POL.

Pol. Think o' the devil—'tis said,
He's at your shoulder——
This wench was running in my head,
And pops—behold her!

AIR.

Lovely nymph, assuage my anguish;
At your feet a tender swain
Prays you will not let him languish,
One kind look would ease his pain.
Did you know the lad who courts you,
He not long need sue in vain;
Prince of song, of dance, of sports—you
Scarce will meet his like again.

Daph. Sir, you're such an olio,
Of perfection in folio,
No damsel can resist you:
Your face so attractive,
Limbs so supple and active,
That, by this light,
At the first sight,
I could have run and kissed you.

AIR.

If you can caper as well as you modulate,
With the addition of that pretty face,
Pan, who was held by our shepherds a god o' late,
Will be kicked out, and you set in his place.

His beard so frowsy, his gestures so aukward are,
And his bagpipe has so drowsy a drone,
That if they find you, as I did, no backwarder,
You may count on all the girls as your own.

Mys. [*From within.*] Pol, Pol! make haste hither.
Pol. Death, what a time to call!
Oh! rot your old lungs of leather.
B'ye, Daph.
Daph. B'ye, Pol.

Enter NYSA.

Nys. Marry come up, forsooth,
Is't me, you forward vixen,
You choose to play your tricks on?
And could your liquorish tooth
Find none but my sweetheart to fix on?

Daph. Marry come up again,
Indeed, my dirty cousin!
Have you a right to every swain?
Nys. Ay, though a dozen.

AIR.

Daph. My minikin miss, do you fancy that Pol
Can ever be caught by an infant's dol?
Nys. Can you, Miss Maypole, suppose he will fall
In love with the giantess of Guild-hall?
Daph. Pigmy elf!
Nys. Colossus itself!
Both. You will lie till you're mouldy upon the sheif.

Daph. You stump o' th' gutter, you hop o' my thumb,
A husband for you must from Lilliput come.
Nys. You stalking steeple, you gawky stag,
Your husband must come from Brobdignag.
Daph. Sour grapes!
Nys. Lead apes!
Both. I'll humble your vanity, Mistress Trapes.

Daph. Miss, your assurance,
Nys. And, miss, your high airs
Daph. Is past all endurance.
Nys. Are at their last prayers.
Daph. No more of those freedoms, Miss Nysa, I beg.
Nys. Miss Daphne's conceit must be lowered a peg.
Daph. } Poor spite!
Nys. } Pride hurt!
Daph. } Liver white!
Nys. } Rare sport!
Daph. } Do, shew your teeth, spitfire, do, but you can't bite,
Nys. } This haughtiness soon will be laid in the dirt.
Poor spite, &c.
Pride hurt, &c.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Grove.*

Enter NYSA, *followed by* MIDAS.

Mid. TURN, tygress, turn; nay, fly not——
I have thee at a why not.
How comes it, little Nysy,
That heart to me so icy
Should be to Pol like tinder,
Burnt up to a very cinder?
Nys. Sir, to my virtue ever steady,
Firm as a rock
I scorn your shock;
But why this attack?
Can you lack,
Who have a wife already?

Mid. Ay, there's the curse—but she is old and sickly;
And would my Nysa grant the favour quickly,
Would she yield now—I swear by the lord Harry,
The moment madam's cothined—Her I'll marry.

AIR.

O what pleasures will abound,
When my wife is laid in ground!
Let earth cover her,
We'll dance over her,
When my wife is laid in ground.
Oh, how happy should I be,
Would little Nysa pig with me!
How I'd mumble her,
Touze and tumble her,
Would little Nysa pig with me!

Nys. Young birds alone are caught with chaff;
At your base scheme I laugh.
Mid. Yet take my vows——
Nys. I would not take your bond, sir——
Mid. Half my estate——
Nys. No; nor the whole—my fond sir.

AIR.

Ne'er will I be left i' the lurch;
Cease your bribes and wheedling:
Till I'm made a bride i' the church,
I'll keep man from meddling.
What are riches,
And soft speeches?
Baits and fetches
To bewitch us:
When you've won us,
And undone us,
Cloy'd, you shun us,
Frowning on us,
For our heedless peddling.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

MIDAS, *then* PAN, *and* POL *listening.*

Mid. Well, master Pol I'll tickle,
For him, at least, I have a rod in pic
When he's in limbo,
Not thus our hoity toity miss,
Will stick her arms a-kimbo.

Pan. So, squire! well met——I flew to your business.
Mid. Why, Pan, this Pol we must bring on his knees.
Pan. That were a feat, indeed;—a f brag on.
Mid. Let's home—we'll there concert it flagon.
I'll make him skip———
Pan. As St. George did the dragon.

AIR.

If into your hen-yard
The treacherous reynard
Steals slily, your poultry to ravage,
With gun you attack him,
With beagles you track him,
All's fair to destroy the fell savage.
So Pol, who comes picking
Up my tender chicken,
No means do I scruple to banish;
With power I'll o'erbear him,
With fraud I'll ensnare him,
By hook or by crook he shall vanis
[*E*

SCENE III.—*A lawn before* MIDAS's *h*

Enter NYSA.

Nys. Good lack! what is come o'er me?
Daphne has stepped before me!
Envy and love devour me.
Pol doats upon her phiz hard;
'Tis that sticks in my gizzard.
Midas appears now twenty times mo
deous.
Ah Nysa! what resource?—a cloyster
Death alive——yet thither must I ru
And turn a nun.
Prodigious!

AIR.

In these greasy old tatters,
His charms brighter shine;
Then his guitar he clatters,
With tinkling divine.

But, my sister,
Ah! he kissed her,
And me he passed by;
I'm jealous
Of the fellow's
Bad taste, and blind eye. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—MIDAS's *parlour.*

MIDAS, MYSIS, *and* PAN, *in consultation over a large bowl of punch, pipes, and tobacco.*

Mid. Come, Pan, your toast——
Pan. Here goes, our noble umpire!
Mys. And Pol's defeat—I'll pledge it in a bumper.
Mid. Hang him! in every scheme that whelp has crossed us.
Mys. Sure he's the devil himself;
Pan. Or doctor Faustus.
Mys. Ah! Squire——for Pan, would you but stoutly stickle,
This Pol would soon be in a wretched pickle.
Pan. You reason right——
Mid. His toby I shall tickle.
Mys. Look, squire, I've sold my butter, here it's price is
At your command, do but this job for Mysis.
Count them—six guineas and an old Jacobus,
Keep Pan, and shame that scape-grace *coram nobis.*
Mid. Goody, as 'tis your request,
I pocket this here stuff;
And as for that there peasant,
Trust me I'll work his buff.
At the musical struggle
I'll bully and juggle;
My award's
Your sure card.
Blood, he shall fly his country—that's enough.
Pan. Well said, my lad of wax!
Mid. Let's end the tankard,
I have no head for business till I've drank hard.
Pan. Nor have my guts brains in them till they're addle,
When I'm most rocky I best sit my saddle.
Mid. Well, come, let's take one bouze, and roar a catch,
Then part to our affairs.
Pan. A match!
Mys. A match!

AIR.

Mid. Master Pol,
And his toll-de-roll-loll,
I'll buffet away from the plain, sir.
Pan. And I'll assist
Your worship's fist
With all my might and main, sir.
Mys. And I'll have a thump,
Though he is so plump,
And make such a wounded racket.
Mid. I'll bluff,
Pan. I'll rough,
Mys. I'll huff,
Mid. I'll cuff.
Omn. And I'll warrant we pepper his jacket.
Mid. For all his cheats,
And wenching feats,
He shall rue on his knees 'em.
O skip, by goles,
As high as Paul's,
Like ugly witch on besom;
Arraign'd he shall be,
Of treason to me!
Pan. And I with my davy will back it;
I'll swear,
Mid. I'll snare,
Mys. I'll tear,
Omn. O rare!
And I'll warrant we pepper his jacket.

SCENE V.

Enter SILENO *and* DAMÆTAS, *in warm argument.*

Sil. My Daph a wife for thee, the squire's base pandar!
To the plantations sooner would I send her.
Dam. Sir, your good wife approved my offers.
Sil. Name her not, hag of Endor,
What knew she of thee but thy coffers?
Dam. And shall this ditch-born whelp, this jack-anapes,
By dint of congees and of scrapes——
Sil. These are thy slanders, and that cankered hag's——
Dam. A thing made up of pilfered rags——
Sil. Richer than thou, with all thy brags
Of flocks, and herds, and money-bags.

AIR.

If a rival thy character draw,
In perfection he'll find out a flaw;
With black he will paint,
Make a de'il of a saint,
And change to an owl a macca.
Dam. Can a father pretend to be wise,
Who his friend's good advice would despise?
Who, when danger is nigh,
Throws his spectacles by,
And blinks through a green girl's eyes?
Sil. You're an impudent pimp, and a grub!
Dam. You are fooled by a beggarly scrub;
Your betters you snub.
Sil. Who will lend me a club,
This insolent puppy to drub?
You are an impudent pimp, and a grub.
Dam. You're cajoled by a beggarly scrub,
Sil. Who will rot in a powdering tub.
Dam. Whom the prince of impostors I dub;
Sil. A guinea for a club,

Dam. Your bald pate you'll rub,
Sil. The muckworm to drub.
Dam. When you find that your cub—
Sil. Rub off, sirrah; rub, sirrah, rub.
Dam. Is debauched by a whip'd syllabub.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Enter MYSIS, *attended by* DAPHNE *and* NYSA.

Mys. Soh! you attend the trial——we shall drive hence
Your vagabond———
Sil. I smoke your foul contrivance.
Daph. Ah, Ny! our fate depends upon this issue———
Nysa. [*To* DAPHNE.] For your sake, my claim I here forego;
And with your Pol much joy I wish you.
Daph. O, gemini! say'st thou me so?
Dear creature, let me kiss you.
Nysa. Let us kneel, and beg his stay; papa will back us.
Daph. Mamma will storm.
Nysa. What then? she can but whack us.

AIR.

Daph. Mother, sure you never
Will endeavour
To dissever
From my favour
So sweet a swain?
None so clever
E'er trode the plain.
Nysa. Father, hopes you gave her,
Don't deceive her;
Can you leave her
Sunk for ever
In pining care?
Haste and save her
From black despair.
Daph. Think of his modest grace,
His voice, shape, and face;
Nysa. Hearts alarming,
Daph. Bosoms warming,
Nysa. Wrath disarming,
Daph. With his soft lay:
Nysa. He's so charming,
Ay, let him stay,
Both. He's so charming, &c.
Mys. Sluts, are you lost to shame?
Sil. Wife, wife, be more tame.
Mys. This is madness!
Sil. Sober sadness!
Mys. I with gladness
Could see him swing,
For his badness.
Sil. 'Tis no such thing.
Dam. Must Pan resign, to this fop, his employment?
Must I, to him, yield of Daphne the enjoyment?
Mys. Ne'er while a tongue I brandish,
Fop outlandish,
Daphne shall blandish.
Dam. Will you reject my income,
Herds and clinkum?
Sil. Rot and sink 'em.
Dam. Midas must judge.
Mys. And Pol must fly.
Sil. Zounds, Pol shan't budge!
Mys. You lie!
Dam. You lie!
Mys. *Dam.* *Sil.* } You lie, you lie!
Nysa. Pan's drone is fit for wild rocks and bleak mountains;
Daph. Pol's lyre suits best our cool grots and clear fountains.
Nysa. Pol is young and merry;
Daph. Light and airy,
Sil. As a fairy.
Nysa. Pan is old and musty:
Daph. Stiff and fusty;
Sil. Sour and crusty.
Daph. Can you banish Pol?
Nysa. No, no, no, no!
Let Pan fall.
Daph. Ay, let him go:
Nysa. *Daph.* *Sil.* } Ay, let him go.

MIDAS *comes forward, enraged, attended by a crowd of Nymphs and Swains.*

Mid. Peace, ho! is hell broke loose? what means this jawing?
Under my very nose this clapper clawing!

AIR.

What the devil's here to do,
Ye logger-heads and gypsies?
Sirrah, you! and bussy, you!
And each of you tipsy is:
But I'll as sure pull down your pride as
A gun, or as I'm justice Midas.

CHORUS.

O, tremendous justice Midas!
Who shall oppose wise justice Midas!

AIR.

Mid. I'm given to understand, that you are all in a pother here,
Disputing whether Pan or Pol shall play to you another year.
Dare you think your clumsy lugs so proper to decide, as
The delicate ears of justice Midas?

CHORUS.

O, tremendous, &c.

Mid. So, you allow it, then! ye mobbish rabble?

Enter POL *and* PAN *severally.*

Oh, here comes Pol and Pan; now stint your gabble.
Fetch my great chair! I'll quickly end this squabble.

AIR.

Now I'm seated,
I'll be treated
Like the sophi on his throne;
In my presence,
Scoundrel peasants,
Shall not call their souls their own.
My behest is,
He who best is,
Shall be fixed musician chief:
Ne'er the loser,
Shall shew nose here,
But be transported like a thief.

CHORUS.

O, tremendous, &c.

Dam. Masters, will you abide by this condition?
Pan. I ask no better.
Pol. I am all submission.
Pan. Strike up, sweet sir.
Pol. Sir, I attend your leisure.
Mid. Pan, take the lead.
Pan. Since 'tis your worship's pleasure.

AIR.

A pox of your pother about this or that;
Your shrieking, or squeaking, a sharp or a flat:
I'm sharp by my bumpers, you're flat, master Pol;
So, here goes a set to at toll-de-roll-lol!

When Beauty her pack of poor lovers would hamper,
And after Miss Will o' the Whisp the fools scamper;
Ding dong, in sing song, they the lady extol:
Pray what's all this fuss for, but——toll-de-roll-loll!

Mankind are a medley——a chance medley race:
All start in full cry, to give Dame Fortune chace:
There's catch as catch can, hit or miss, luck is all;
And luck's the best tune of life's toll-de-roll-loll!

I've done, please your worship, 'tis rather too long;
I only meant life is but an old song.
The world's but a tragedy, comedy, droll;
Where all act the scene of toll-de-roll-loll!

Mid. By jingo! well performed for one of his age;
How, hang dog! don't you blush to shew your visage?
Pol. Why, master Midas, for that matter,
'Tis enough to dash one,
To hear the arbitrator,
In such unseemly fashion,
One of the candidates bespatter,
With so much partial passion.
[MIDAS *falls asleep.*

AIR.

Ah, happy hours, how fleeting
Ye danced on down away;
When my soft vows repeating,
At Daphne's feet I lay!

But from her charms when sundered,
As Midas' frowns presage;
Each hour will seem an hundred;
Each day appear an age.

Mid. Silence! this just decree, all, at your peril,
Obedient hear—else I shall use you very ill.

THE DECREE.

Pan shall remain;
Pol quit the plain.

CHORUS.

O, tremendous, &c.

Mid. All bow with me to mighty Pan——enthrone him———
No pouting——and with festal chorus crown him———
[*The crowd form two ranks beside the chair, and join in the chorus, whilst* MIDAS *crowns him with bays.*

CHORUS.

See, triumphant, sits the bard,
Crowned with bays, his due reward;
Exiled Pol shall wander far;
Exiled twang his faint guitar;

While, with echoing shouts of praise,
We the bagpipe's glory raise.

Mid. 'Tis well. What keeps you here, you ragamuffin?
Go trudge—or do you wait for a good cuffing?
Pol. Now, all attend. [*Throws off his disguise, and appears as* APOLLO.]—The wrath of Jove, for rapine,
Corruption, lust, pride, fraud, there's no escaping.
Tremble, thou wretch! thou'st stretched thy utmost tether;
Thou and thy tools shall go to pot together.

AIR.

Dunce, I did but sham,
For Apollo I am,
God of Music, and king of Parnass;
Thy scurvy decree,
For Pan against me,
I reward with the ears of an ass.

Mid. Detected, baulked, and small,
On our marrow-bones we fall.
Mys. Be merciful!
Dam. Be pitiful!
Mid. Forgive us, mighty Sol. Alas, alas!

AIR.

Apollo. Thou a Billinsgate quean, [*To* MYS.
Thou a pandar obscene, [*To* DAM.
With strumpets and bailiffs shall class;
Thou, driven from man, [*To* MID.
Shalt wander with Pan,
He a stinking old goat, thou an ass, an ass, &c.

Be thou squire—his estate [*To* SIL.
To thee I translate.
To you his strong chests, wicked mass;
[*To* DAPH *and* NYSA.
Live happy, while I,
Recalled to the sky,
Make all the gods laugh at Midas.

Daph. *Sil.* *Nysa.* (*together with the other Nymphs and Swains.*) To the bright god of day,
Let us dance, sing, and play;
Clap hands every lad with his lass.

Daph. Now, critics, lie snug,
Not a hiss, groan, or shrug;
Remember the fate of Midas,
Midas;
Remember the fate of Midas.

CHORUS,

Now, critics, lie snug, &c.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

MAID OF THE MILL.

BY

BICKERSTAFF.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
LORD AIMWORTH, *attached to* PATTY.	LADY SYCAMORE, *wife to* SIR HARRY.
SIR HARRY SYCAMORE, *father to* THEODOSIA.	THEODOSIA, *attached to* MERVIN.
MERVIN, *attached to* THEODOSIA.	PATTY, *the Maid of the Mill.*
FAIRFIELD, *the miller.*	FANNY, *a gypsey.*
GILES, *a farmer, attached to* PATTY.	
RALPH, *son to* FAIRFIELD.	

Scene—A village in England.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A rural prospect, with a mill at work. Several people employed about; on one side a house,* PATTY *reading in the window; on the other a barn, where* FANNY *sits mending a net;* GILES *appears at a distance in the mill;* FAIRFIELD *and* RALPH *taking sacks from a cart.*

CHORUS.

FREE from sorrow, free from strife,
O how blest the miller's life!
Chearful working through the day,
Still he laughs, and sings away.
Nought can vex him,
Nought perplex him,
While there's grist to make him gay.

DUET.

Let the great enjoy the blessings
By indulgent fortune sent:
What can wealth, can grandeur offer
More than plenty and content?

Fair. Well done, well done! 'tis a sure sign work goes on merrily, when folks sing at it. Stop the mill there! and dost hear, son Ralph? hoist yon sacks of flour upon this cart, lad, and drive it up to lord Aimworth's; coming from London last night with strange company, no doubt there are calls enough for it by this time.

Ralph. Ay, feyther, whether or not, there's no doubt but you'll find enow for a body to do.

Fair. What, dost mutter? Is't not a strange plague that thou can'st never go about any thing with a good will! murrain take it, what's come o'er the boy? So, then, thou wilt not set a hand to what I have desired thee?

Ralph. Why don't you speak to suster Pat to do something, then? I thought when she came home to us, after my old lady's death, she was to

have been of some use in the house; but, instead of that, she sits there all day, reading outlandish books, dressed like a fine madumasel, and the never a word you says to she.

Fair. Sirrah, don't speak so disrespectfully of thy sister! thou wilt never have the tithe of her deserts.

Ralph. Why I'll read and write with her for what she dares; and as for playing on the hapsicols, I thinks her good rich mother might have learned her something more properer, seeing she did not remember to leave her a legacy at last.

Fair. That's none of thy business, sirrah.

Ralph. A farmer's wife painting pictures, and playing on the hapsicols! why I'll be hanged now, for all as old as she is, if she knows any more about milking a cow, than I do of sewing a petticoat.

Fair. Ralph, thou hast been drinking this morning.

Ralph. Well, if so be as I have, it's nothing out of your pocket, nor mine neither.

Fair. Who has been giving thee liquor, sirrah?

Ralph. Why it was wind—a gentleman guve me.

Fair. A gentleman!

Ralph. Yes, a gentleman that's come piping hot from London: he is below at the Cat and Bagpipes; I cod he rides a choice bit of a nag; I dare to say she'd fetch as good as forty pound at ever a fair in all England.

Fair. A fig's end for what she'd fetch! mind thy business, or by the lord Harry——

Ralph. Why I won't do another hand's turn to-day now, so that's flat.

Fair. Thou wilt not——

Ralph. Why no, I won't; so, what argufies your putting yourself in a passion, feyther? I've promised to go back to the gentleman; and I don't know but what he's a lord too, and mayhap he may do more for me than you thinks of.

Fair. Well, son Ralph, run thy gait; but remember I tell thee, thou wilt repent this untowardness.

Ralph. Why, how shall I repent it? Mayhap you'll turn me out of your service? a match; with all hearts—I cod I don't care three brass pins.

AIR.

If that's all you want, who the plague will be sorry?
'Twere better by half to dig stones in a quarry;
For my share, I'm weary of what is got by't:
S'flesh! here's such a racket, such scolding and coiling,
You're never content, but when folks are a toiling,
And drudging, like horses, from morning 'till night.
You think I'm afraid? but the difference to shew you,
First, yonder's your shovel; your sacks, too, I throw you;
Henceforward take care of your matters who will;
They're welcome to slave for your wages who need 'em,
Tol lol derol lol, I have purchase a my freedom,
And never hereafter shall work at the mill.
[*Exit.*

Enter PATTY.

Fair. Dear heart, dear heart! I protest this ungracious boy puts me quite beside myself. Patty, my dear, come down into the yard a little, and keep me company—and you, thieves, vagabonds, gipsies, out here! 'tis you who debauch my son.

AIR.

Pat. In love to pine and languish,
Yet know your passion vain;
To harbour heart-felt anguish,
Yet fear to tell your pain.

What powers unrelenting,
Severer ills inventing,
Can sharpen pangs like these?
Where days and nights tormenting,
Yield not a moment's ease!

Fair. Well, Patty, master Goodman, my lord's steward, has been with me just now, and I find we are like to have great doings; his lordship has brought down sir Harry Sycamore and his family, and there is more company expected in a few days.

Pat. I know sir Harry very well; he is by marriage a distant relation of my lord's.

Fair. Pray, what sort of a young body is the daughter there? I think she used to be with you at the castle, three or four summers ago, when my young lord was out upon his travels.

Pat. Oh! very often; she was a great favourite of my lady's: pray, father, is she come down?

Fair. Why, you know the report last night, about my lord's going to be married? by what I can learn she is; and there is likely to be a nearer relationship between the families, ere long. It seems, his lordship was not over willing for the match, but the friends on both sides in London pressed it so hard: then, there's a swinging fortune: Master Goodman tells me, a matter of twenty or thirty thousand pounds.

Pat. If it was a million, father, it would not be more than my lord Aimworth deserves; I suppose the wedding will be celebrated here at the mansion-house?

Fair. So it is thought, as soon as things can be properly prepared——And now, Patty, if I could but see thee a little merry—Come, bless thee, pluck up thy spirits!—To be sure thou hast sustained, in the death of thy lady, a heavy loss; she was a parent to thee; nay, and better, inasmuch as she took thee, when thou wert but a babe, and gave thee an education which thy natural parents could not afford to do.

Pat. Ah! dear father, don't mention what, perhaps, has been my greatest misfortune.

Fair. Nay, then, Patty, what's become of all thy sense, that people talk so much about?—— But I have something to say to thee, which I would have thee consider seriously.——I believe I need not tell thee, my child, that a young maiden, after she is marriageable, especially if she has any thing about her to draw people's notice, is liable to ill tongues, and a many cross accidents; so that, the sooner she's out of harm's way, the better.

Pat. Undoubtedly, father, there are people enough who watch every opportunity to gratify their own malice; but when a young woman's conduct is unblameable———

Fair. Why, Patty, there may be something in that; but you know slander will leave spots, where malice finds none: I say, then, a young woman's best safeguard is a good husband. Now there is our neighbour, Farmer Giles; he is a sober, honest, industrious young fellow, and one of the wealthiest in these parts; he is greatly taken with thee, and it is not the first time I have told thee I should be glad to have him for a son-in-law.

Pat. And I have told you as often, father, I would submit myself entirely to your direction; whatever you think proper for me, is so.

Fair. Why that's spoken like a dutiful, sensible girl; get thee in, then, and leave me to manage it. Perhaps our neighbour Giles is not a gentleman; but what are the greatest part of our country gentlemen good for?

Pat. Very true, father. The sentiments, indeed, have frequently little correspondence with the condition; and it is according to them alone we ought to regulate our esteem.

AIR.

What are outward forms and shews,
To an honest heart compared?
Oft the rustic, wanting those,
Has the nobler portion shared.

Oft we see the homely flower
Bearing, at the hedge's side,
Virtues of more sovereign power
Than the garden's gayest pride. [*Exit.*

Enter GILES.

Giles. Well, Master Fairfield, you and Miss Pat have had a long discourse together; did you tell her that I was come down?

Fair. No, in truth, friend Giles; but I mentioned our affair at a distance; and I think there is no fear.

Giles. That's right—and when shall us—You do know I have told you my mind often and often.

Fair. Farmer, give us thy hand; nobody doubts thy good will to me and my girl; and you may take my word, I would rather give her to thee than another; for I am main certain thou wilt make her a good husband.

Giles. Thanks to your good opinion, Master Fairfield; if such be my hap, I hope there will be no cause of complaint.

Fair. And I promise thee my daughter will make thee a choice wife. But thou know'st, friend Giles, that I, and all belongs to me, have great obligations to lord Aimworth's family. Patty, in particular, would be one of the most ungrateful wretches this day breathing, if she was to do the smallest thing contrary to their consent and approbation.

Giles. Nay, nay, 'tis well enough known to all the country, she was the old lady's darling.

Fair. Well, Master Giles, I'll assure thee she is not one whit less obliged to my lord himself. When his mother was taken off so suddenly, and his affairs called him up to London, if Patty would have remained at the castle, she might have had the command of all; or if she would have gone any where else, he would have paid for her fixing, let the cost be what it would.

Giles. Why, for that matter, folks did not spare to say, that my lord had a sort of a sneaking kindness for her himself: and I remember, at one time, it was rife all about the neighbourhood, that she was actually to be our lady.

Fair. Pho, pho! a pack of womans' tales.

Giles. Nay, to be sure they'll say any thing.

Fair. My lord's a man of a better way of thinking, friend Giles—but this is neither here nor there to our business——Have you been at the castle yet?

Giles. Who I! Bless your heart, I did not hear a syllable of his lordship's being come down, 'till your lad told me.

Fair. No! why, then, go up to my lord; let him know you have a mind to make a match with my daughter; hear what he has to say to it; and afterwards we will try if we can't settle matters.

Giles. Go up to my lord! Icod if that be all, I'll do it with the biggest pleasure in life. But where's Miss Pat? Might one not ax her how she do?

Fair. Never spare it; she's within there.

Giles. I see her—odd rabbit it, this hatch is locked now—Miss Pat—Miss Patty—She makes believe not to hear me.

Fair. Well, well, never mind; thou'lt come and eat a morsel of dinner with us.

Giles. Nay, but just to have a bit of a joke with her at present—Miss Pat, I say—won't you open the door?

AIR.

Hark! 'tis I your own true lover,
After walking three long miles,
One kind look at least discover,
Come and speak a word to Giles.
You alone my heart I fix on:
Ah, you little cunning vixen!
I can see your roguish smiles.
Addslids! my mind is so possest,
Till we're sped, I shan't have rest;
Only say the thing's a bargain,
Here an you like it,
Ready to strike it,
There's at once an end of arguing:
I'm her's, she's mine;
Thus we seal, and thus we sign. [*Exit.*

Enter PATTY.

Fair. Patty, child, why would'st not thou open the door for our neighbour Giles?

Pat. Really, father, I did not know what was the matter.

Fair. Well, another time; he'll be here again presently. He's gone up to the castle, Patty; thou knowest it would not be right for us to do any thing without giving his lordship intelligence; so I have sent the farmer to let him know that he is willing, and we are willing; and, with his lordship's approbation———

Pat. Oh, dear father! what are you going to say?

Fair. Nay, child, I would not have stirred a step for fifty pounds, without advertising his lordship before-hand.

Pat. But surely, surely, you have not done this rash, this precipitate thing?

Fair. How rash, how is it rash, Patty? I don't understand thee.

Pat. Oh, you have distressed me beyond imagination! but why would you not give me notice? speak to me first?

Fair. Why, han't I spoken to thee an hundred times? No, Patty, 'tis thou that would'st distress me, and thou'lt break my heart.

Pat. Dear father!

Fair. All I desire is, to see thee well settled; and now that I am likely to do so, thou art not contented. I am sure the farmer is as sightly a clever lad as any in the country; and is he not as good as we?

Pat. 'Tis very true, father; I am to blame; pray, forgive me.

Fair. Forgive thee! Lord help thee, my child, I am not angry with thee; but quiet thyself, Patty, and thou'lt see all this will turn out for the best. [*Exit.*

Pat. What will become of me? My lord will certainly imagine this is done with my consent—Well, is he not himself going to be married to a lady, suitable to him in rank, suitable to him in fortune, as this farmer is to me? and, under what pretence can I refuse the husband my father has found for me? Shall I say that I have dared to raise my inclinations above my condition, and presumed to love, where my duty taught me only gratitude and respect? Alas! Who could live in the house with lord Aimworth, see him, converse with him, and not love him? I have this consolation, however, my folly is yet undiscovered to any; else, how should I be ridiculed and despised! nay, would not my lord himself despise me, especially, if he knew that I have more than once construed his natural affability and politeness into sentiments as unworthy of him, as mine are bold and extravagant. Unexampled vanity! Did I possess any thing capable of attracting such a notice, to what purpose could a man of his distinction cast his eyes on a girl, poor, meanly born, and indebted for every thing to the ill-placed bounty of his family?

AIR.

Ah! why should Fate, pursuing
A wretched thing like me,
Heap ruin thus on ruin,
And add to misery?
The griefs I languished under,
In secret let me share;
But this new stroke of thunder,
Is more than I can bear.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to a chamber in* LORD AIMWORTH'S *house.*

Enter SIR HARRY SYCAMORE *and* THEODOSIA.

Sir Har. Well, but, Theodosia, child, you are quite unreasonable.

The. Pardon me, papa, it is not I am unreasonable: when I gave way to my inclinations for Mr Mervin, he did not seem less agreeable to you and my mamma, than he was acceptable to me. It is, therefore, you have been unreasonable, in first encouraging his addresses, and afterwards forbidding him your house, in order to bring me down here, to force me on a gentleman———

Sir Har. Force you, Dossy! what do you mean? By the la, I would not force you on the czar of Muscovy!

The. And yet, papa, what else can you call it? For though lord Aimworth is extremely attentive

nd obliging, I assure you he is by no means one of the most ardent of lovers.

Sir Har. Ardent! Ah, there it is; you girls never think there is any love, without kissing and hugging; but you should consider, child, my lord Aimworth is a polite man, and has been abroad in France and Italy, where these things are not the fashion. I remember, when I was on my travels among the madames and signoras, we never saluted more than the tip of the ear.

The. Really, papa, you have a very strange opinion of my delicacy; I had no such stuff in my thoughts.

Sir Har. Well, come, my poor Dossy, I see you are chagrined, but you know it is not my fault; on the contrary, I assure you, I had always a great regard for young Mervin, and should have been very glad——

The. How then, papa, could you join in forcing me to write him that strange letter, never to see me more; or how, indeed, could I comply with your commands? What must he think of me?

Sir Har. Ay, but hold, Dossy; your mamma convinced me that he was not so proper a son-in-law for us as lord Aimworth.

The. Convinced you! Ah, my dear papa, you were not convinced.

Sir Har. What! don't I know when I am convinced?

The. Why no, papa; because your good-nature and easiness of temper is such, that you pay more respect to the judgment of mamma, and less to your own, than you ought to do.

Sir Har. Well, but, Dossy, don't you see how your mamma loves me? if my finger does but ache, she's like a bewitched woman; and, if I was to die, I don't believe she would outlive the burying of me: nay, she has told me as much herself.

The. Her fondness, indeed, is very extraordinary.

Sir Har. Besides, could you give up the prospect of being a countess, and mistress of this fine place?

The. Yes, truly could I.

AIR.

With the man that I love, was I destined to dwell,
On a mountain, a moor, in a cot, in a cell,
Retreats the most barren, most desert, would be
More pleasing than courts, or a palace, to me.

Let the vain and the venal, in wedlock aspire
To what folly esteems, and the vulgar admire;
I yield them the bliss, where their wishes are placed;
Insensible creatures! 'tis all they can taste.

Enter LADY SYCAMORE.

Lady Syc. Sir Harry, where are you?

Sir Har. Here, my lamb!

Lady Syc. I am just come from looking over his lordship's family trinkets. Well, Miss Sycamore, you are a happy creature, to have diamonds, equipage, title, all the blessings of life poured thus upon you at once.

The. Blessings, madam! Do you think, then, I am such a wretch as to place my felicity in the possession of any such trumpery?

Lady Syc. Upon my word, miss, you have a very disdainful manner of expressing yourself. I believe there are very few young women of fashion, who would think any sacrifice they could make, too much for them. Did you ever hear the like of her, sir Harry?

Sir Har. Why, my dear, I have just been talking to her in the same strain; but, whatever she has got in her head——

Lady Syc. Oh, it is Mr Mervin, her gentleman of Bucklersbury. Fie, miss, marry a cit! where is your pride, your vanity? have you nothing of the person of distinction about you?

Sir Har. Well, but, my lady, you know I am a piece of a cit myself, as I may say; for my great grandfather was a dry salter.

The. And yet, madam, you condescended to marry my papa?

Lady Syc. Well, if I did, miss, I had but five thousand pounds to my portion, and sir Harry knows I was past eight and thirty, before I would listen to him.

Sir Har. Nay, Dossy, that's true; your mamma owned eight and thirty, before we were married; but, by the la, my dear, you were a lovely angel! and, by candle-light, nobody would have taken you for above five and twenty.

Lady Syc. Sir Harry, you remember the last time I was at my lord duke's?

Sir Har. Yes, my love; it was the very day your little bitch Minxey pupt.

Lady Syc. And pray, what did the whole family say? my lord John, and my lord Thomas, and my lady duchess in particular? Cousin, says her grace to me—for she always called me cousin———

The. Well, but, madam, to cut this matter short at once, my father has a great regard for Mr Mervin, and would consent to our union with all his heart.

Lady Syc. Do you say so, sir Harry?

Sir Har. Who, I, love!

Lady Syc. Then, all my care and prudence are come to nothing.

Sir Har. Well, but stay, my lady—Dossy, you are always making mischief.

The. Ah! my dear sweet———

Lady Syc. Do, miss; that's right; coax——

The. No, madam, I am not capable of any such meanness.

Lady Syc. 'Tis very civil of you to contradict me, however.

Sir Har. Eh! what's that?—hands off, Dossy; don't come near me.

AIR.

Why, how now, Miss Pert,
Do you think to divert
My anger by fawning and stroking?
Would you make me a fool,
Your play-thing, your tool?
Was ever young minx so provoking?
Get out of my sight!
'Twould be serving you right,
To lay a sound dose of the lash on;
Contradict your mamma!
I've a mind, by the la!—
But I won't put myself in a passion.
[*Exit* THE.

Enter LORD AIMWORTH *and* GILES.

Lord Aim. Come, farmer, you may come in; there are none here but friends—sir Harry, your servant.

Sir Har. My lord, I kiss your lordship's hands ———I hope he did not overhear us squabbling —[*Aside.*]—I have been chattering, here, with my wife and daughter, my lord—We have been examining your lordship's pictures.

Lord Aim. I flatter myself, then, her ladyship found something to entertain her; there are a few of them counted tolerable. Well now, master Giles, what is it you have got to say to me? If I can do you any service, this company will give you leave to speak.

Giles. I thank your lordship; I has not got a great deal to say. I do come to your lordship about a little business, if you'll please to give me the hearing.

Lord Aim. Certainly, only let me know what it is.

Giles. Why, an please you, my lord, being left alone, as I may say, feyther dead, and all the business upon my own hands, I do think of settling and taking a wife, and am come to ax your honour's consent.

Lord Aim. My consent, farmer! If that be necessary, you have it with all my heart——I hope you have taken care to make a prudent choice?

Giles. Why, I do hope so, my lord.

Lord Aim. Well, and who is the happy fair one? Does she live in my house?

Giles. No, my lord, she does not live in your house, but she's a parson of your acquaintance.

Lord Aim. Of my acquaintance?

Giles. No offence, I hope, your honour.

Lord Aim. None in the least; but how is she an acquaintance of mine?

Giles. Your lordship do know miller Fairfield?

Lord Aim. Well——

Giles. And Patty Fairfield, his daughter, my lord?

Lord Aim. Ay! is it her you think of marrying?

Giles. Why, if so be as your lordship has no objection; to be sure, we will do nothing without your consent and approbation.

Lord Aim. Upon my word, farmer, you have made an excellent choice—It is a god-daughter of my mother's, madam, who was bred up under her care, and I protest I do not know a more amiable young woman. But are you sure, farmer, that Patty herself is inclinable to this match?

Giles. O yes, my lord, I am certain of that.

Lord Aim. Perhaps, then, she desired you to come and ask my consent?

Giles. Why, as far as this here, my lord; to be sure, the miller did not care to publish the banns, without making your lordship acquainted —But I hope your honour's not angry with I?

Lord Aim. Angry, farmer! Why should you think so? What interest have I in it to be angry?

Sir Har. And so, honest farmer, you are going to be married to little Patty Fairfield? She's an old acquaintance of mine; how long have you and she been sweethearts?

Giles. Not a long while, an please your worship.

Sir Har. Well, her father's a good warm fellow; I suppose you take care that she brings something to make the pot boil?

Lady Syc. What does that concern you, sir Harry? How often must I tell you of meddling in other people's affairs?

Sir Har. My lord, a penny for your thoughts.

Lord Aim. I beg your pardon, sir Harry: upon my word, I did not think where I was.

Giles. Well then, your honour, I'll make bold to be taking my leave; I may say you gave consent for Miss Patty and I to go on?

Lord Aim. Undoubtedly, farmer, if she approves of it: but are you not afraid, that her education has rendered her a little unsuitable for a wife for you?

Lady Syc. Oh, my lord, if the girl's handy—

Sir Har. Oh, ay—when a girl's handy—

Giles. Handy! Why, saving respect, there's nothing comes amiss to her; she's cute at every varsal kind of thing.

AIR.

Odd's my life, search England over,
An you match her in her station,
I'll be bound to fly the nation:
And be sure as well I love her.

Do but feel my heart a beating,
Still her pretty name repeating;
Here's the work 'tis always at,
Pitty, patty, pat, pit, pat!

When she makes the music tinkle,
What on yearth can sweeter be?
Then her little eyes so twinkle,
'Tis a feast to hear and see.

[*Exit* GILES.

Sir Har. By dad, this is a good merry fellow! is not he in love with his pitty patty?—And so, my lord, you have given your consent that he shall marry your mother's old housekeeper? Ah, well, I can see———

Lord Aim. Nobody doubts, sir Harry, that you are very clear-sighted.

Sir Har. Yes, yes, let me alone, I know what's what: I was a young fellow once myself; and I should have been glad of a tenant to take a pretty girl off my hands, now and then, as well as another.

Lord Aim. I protest, my dear friend, I don't understand you.

Lady Syc. Nor nobody else:—sir Harry, you are going at some beastliness now.

Sir Har. Who, I, my lady! Not I, as I hope to live and breathe! 'tis nothing to us, you know, what my lord does before he is married; when I was a bachelor, I was a devil among the wenches myself; and yet I vow to George, my lord, since I knew my lady Sycamore, and we shall be man and wife eighteen years, if we live till next Candlemas day, I never had to do——

Lady Syc. Sir Harry, come out of the room, I desire.

Sir Har. Why, what's the matter, my lady? I did not say any harm.

Lady Syc. I see what you are driving at; you want to make me faint.

Sir Har. I want to make you faint, my lady!

Lady Syc. Yes, you do—and, if you don't come out this instant, I shall fall down in the chamber—I beg, my lord, you won't speak to him. Will you come out, sir Harry?

Sir Har. Nay, but, my lady——

Lady Syc. No; I will have you out.

[*Exeunt* SIR HAR. *and* LADY SYC.

Lord Aim. This worthy baronet and his lady are certainly a very whimsical couple; however, their daughter is perfectly amiable, in every respect: and yet, I am sorry I have brought her down here; for can I in honour marry her, while my affections are engaged to another? To what does the pride of condition, and the censure of the world, force me! Must I, then, renounce the only person that can make me happy; because—because what? because she's a miller's daughter? Vain pride, and unjust censure! has she not all the graces that education can give her sex, improved by a genius seldom found among the highest? has she not modesty, sweetness of temper, and beauty of person, capable of adorning a rank the most exalted? But it is too late to think of these things now; my hand is promised, my honour engaged: and if it was not so, she has engaged herself; the farmer is a person to her mind, and I have authorised their union by my approbation.

AIR.

The madman thus, at times, we see,
With seeming reason blest;
His looks, his words, his thoughts, are free,
And speak a mind at rest.

But short the calms of ease and sense,
And ah! uncertain, too;
While that idea lives, from whence
At first his frenzy grew.

[*Exit* LORD AIM.

SCENE III.—*Changes to the prospect of the mill.*

Enter RALPH, *with* MERVIN, *in a riding-dress, followed by* FANNY.

Fan. Ah, pray, your honour, try if you have not something to spare for poor Fanny the gipsey!

Ralph. I tell you, Fan, the gentleman has no change about him; why the plague will you be so troublesome?

Fan. Lord, what is it to you, if his honour has a mind to give me a trifle? Do, pray, gentleman, put your hand in your pocket.

Mer. I am almost distracted! Ungrateful Theodosia, to change so suddenly, and write me such a letter! However, I am resolved to have my dismission face to face; this letter may be forced from her by her mother, who, I know was never cordially my friend. I could not get a sight of her in London, but here they will be less on their guard; and see her I will, by one means or other.

Fan. Then your honour will not extend your charity?

AIR.

I am young, and I am friendless,
And poor, alas! withal;
Sure my sorrows will be endless;
In vain for help I call.
Have some pity in your nature,
To relieve a wretched creature,
Though the gift be ne'er so small.

May you, possessing every blessing,
Still inherit, sir, all you merit, sir,
And never know what it is to want;
Sweet heaven, your worship all happiness grant!

[*Exit* FANNY.

Ralph. Now I'll go and take that money from her, and I have good mind to lick her, so I have.

Mer. Pho! prithee, stay where you are.

Ralph. Nay, but I hate to see a toad so devilish greedy.

Mer. Well, come, she has not got a great deal, and I have thought how she may do me a favour in her turn.

Ralph. Ay, but you may put that out of your head, for I can tell you she won't.

Mer. How so?

Ralph. How so! why, she's as cunning as the devil.

Mer. O she is——I fancy I understand you. Well, in that case, friend Ralph—Your name's Ralph, I think?

Ralph. Yes, sir, at your service, for want of a better.

Mer. I say, then, friend Ralph, in that case, we will remit the favour you think of, till the lady is in a more complying humour, and try if she cannot serve me at present in some other capacity—There are a good many gipsies hereabout, are there not?

Ralph. Softly—I have a whole gang of them here, in our barn; I have kept them all out the place these three months, and all on account of she.

Mer. Really!

Ralph. Yea——but for your life don't say a word of it to any Christian——I am in love with her.

Mer. Indeed!

Ralph. Feyther is as mad with me about it as old Scratch; and I gets the plague and all of anger; but I don't mind that.

Mer. Well, friend Ralph, if you are in love, no doubt you have some influence over your mistress. Don't you think you could prevail upon her, and her companions, to supply me with one of their habits, and let me go up with them today to my lord Ainworth's?

Ralph. Why, do you want to go a mumming? We never do that here, but in the Christmas holidays.

Mer. No matter: manage this for me, and manage it with secrecy, and I promise you shall not go unrewarded.

Ralph. Oh! as for that, sir, I don't look for any thing; I can easily get you a bundle of their rags; but I don't know whether you'll prevail on them to go up to my lord's, because they're afraid of a big dog that's in the yard: but I'll tell you what I can do; I can go up before you, and have the dog fastened, for I know his kennel.

Mer. That will do very well—By means of this disguise, I shall probably get a sight of her; and I leave the rest to love and fortune.

AIR.

Why quits the merchant, blest with ease,
The pleasures of his native seat,
To tempt the dangers of the seas,
And crimes more perilous than these,
Midst freezing cold, or scorching heat?

He knows the hardships, knows the pain,
The length of way, but thinks it small;
The sweets of what he hopes to gain,
Undaunted, make him combat all.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Enter PATTY, RALPH, GILES, *and* FANNY.

Giles. So his lordship was as willing as the flowers in May——and as I was coming along, who should I meet but your father—and he bid me run in all haste and tell you—for we were sure you would be deadly glad.

Pat. I know not what business you had to go to my lord's at all, farmer.

Giles. Nay, I only did as I was desired—Master Fairfield bid me tell you, moreover, as how he would have you go up to my lord out of hand, and thank him.

Ralph. So she ought; and take off those clothes, and put on what's more becoming her station; you know my father spoke to you of that this morning too.

Pat. Brother, I shall obey my father.

AIR.

Pat. Lie still my heart; oh, fatal stroke,
That kills at once my hopes and me!

Giles. Miss Pat!

Pat. What?

Giles. Nay, I only spoke:

Ralph. Take courage, mun, she does but joke;
Come, suster, somewhat kinder be.

Fan. This is a thing the most oddest,
Some folks are so plaguily modest!

Ralph. } Were we in the case,
Fan. } To be in their place,
We'd carry it off with a different face.

Giles. Thus I take her by the lily hand,
So soft and white.

Ralph. Why now that's right;
And kiss her too, mun, never stand.

Pat. } What words can explain
Giles. } My pleasure—my pain?
It presses, it rises,
My heart it surprises,
I can't keep it down, though I'd never so fain.

Fan. So here the play ends,
The lovers are friends;

Ralph. Hush!

Fan. Tush!

Giles. Nah!
Pat. Psha!
All. What torment's exceeding, what joys are above,
The pains and the pleasures that wait upon love!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A marble portico, ornamented with statues, which opens from* LORD AIMWORTH'S *house; two chairs near the front.*

Enter LORD AIMWORTH, *reading.*

IN how contemptible a light would the situation I am now in shew me to most of the fine men of the present age! In love with a country girl—rivalled by a poor fellow, one of my meanest tenants, and uneasy at it! If I had a mind to her, I know they would tell me, I ought to have taken care to make myself easy long ago, when I had her in my power. But I have the testimony of my own heart in my favour; and I think, was it to do again, I should act as I have done. Let's see what we have here—perhaps a book may compose my thoughts. [*Reads, and throws the book away.*] It's to no purpose—I can't read, I can't think, I can't do any thing!

AIR.

Ah! how vainly mortals treasure
Hopes of happiness and pleasure,
Hard and doubtful to obtain;
By what standards false we measure!
Still pursuing
Ways to ruin,
Seeking bliss, and finding pain.

Enter PATTY.

Pat. Now comes the trial! no, my sentence is already pronounced, and I will meet my fate with prudence and resolution.

Lord Aim. Who's there?

Pat. My lord!

Lord Aim. Patty Fairfield!

Pat. I humbly beg pardon, my lord, for pressing so abruptly into your presence; but I was told I might walk this way; and I am come by my father's commands to thank your lordship for all your favours.

Lord Aim. Favours, Patty! what favours? I have done you none: but why this metamorphosis? I protest, if you had not spoke, I should not have known you; I never saw you wear such clothes as these in my mother's life-time.

Pat. No, my lord, it was her ladyship's pleasure I should wear better, and therefore I obeyed; but it is now my duty to dress in a manner more suitable to my station, and future prospects in life.

Lord Aim. I am afraid, Patty, you are too humble—come, sit down—nay, I will have it so. What is it I have been told to-day, Patty? It seems you are going to be married?

Pat. Yes, my lord.

Lord Aim. Well, and don't you think you could have made a better choice than farmer Giles? I should imagine your person, your accomplishments, might have entitled you to look higher.

Pat. Your lordship is pleased to over-rate my little merit: the education I received in your family does not entitle me to forget my origin; and the farmer is my equal.

Lord Aim. In what respect? The degrees of rank and fortune, my dear Patty, are arbitrary distinctions, unworthy the regard of those who consider justly. The true standard of equality is seated in the mind: those who think nobly are noble.

Pat. The farmer, my lord, is a very honest man.

Lord Aim. So he may—I don't suppose he would break into a house, or commit a robbery on the highway: what do you tell me of his honesty for?

Pat. I did not mean to offend your lordship.

Lord Aim. Offend! I am not offended, Patty; not at all offended—But is there any great merit in a man's being honest?

Pat. I don't say there is, my lord.

Lord Aim. The farmer is an ill-bred, illiterate booby; and what happiness can you propose to yourself in such a society? Then, as to his person, I am sure—But perhaps, Patty, you like him; and if so, I am doing a wrong thing.

Pat. Upon my word, my lord——

Lord Aim. Nay, I see you do: he has had the good fortune to please you; and, in that case, you are certainly in the right to follow your inclinations—I must tell you one thing, Patty, however—I hope you won't think it unfriendly of me—But I am determined farmer Giles shall not stay a moment on my estate, after next quarter-day.

Pat. I hope, my lord, he has not incurred your displeasure——

Lord Aim. That's of no signification—Could I find as many good qualities in him as you do, perhaps——But 'tis enough, he's a fellow I don't like; and, as you have a regard for him, I would have you advise him to provide himself.

Pat. My lord, I am very unfortunate!

Lord Aim. She loves him, 'tis plain——Come, Patty, don't cry; I would not willingly do any thing to make you uneasy—Have you seen Miss

Sycamore yet?—I suppose you know she and I are going to be married.

Pat. So I hear, my lord——Heaven make you both happy!

Lord Aim. Thank you, Patty; I hope we shall be happy.

Pat. Upon my knees, upon my knees, I pray it! May every earthly bliss attend you! may your days prove an uninterrupted course of delightful tranquillity! and your mutual friendship, confidence, and love, end but with your lives!

Lord Aim. Rise, Patty, rise; say no more—I suppose you'll wait upon Miss Sycamore before you go away—at present, I have a little business ——As I said, Patty, don't afflict yourself: I have been somewhat hasty with regard to the farmer; but since I see how deeply you are interested in his affairs, I may possibly alter my designs with regard to him——You know—You know, Patty, your marriage with him is no concern of mine—I only speak———

AIR.

My passion in vain I attempt to dissemble;
Th' endeavour to hide it, but makes it appear:
Enraptured, I gaze; when I touch her, I tremble,
And speak to and hear her, with faultering and fear.

By how many cruel ideas tormented!
My blood's in a ferment—it freezes, it burns!
This moment I wish, what the next is repented;
While love, rage, and jealousy, rack me by turns.

[*Exit.*

Enter GILES.

Giles. Miss Pat—Odd rabbit it, I thought his honour was here; and I wish I may die if my heart did not jump into my mouth—Come, come down in all haste! there's such rig below as you never knew in your born days.

Pat. Rig!

Giles. Ay, and fun—There's as good as forty of the tenants, men and maidens, have got upon the lawn before the castle, with pipers and garlands; just for all the world as thof it was May-day; and the quality's looking at them out of the windows—'Tis as true as any thing; on account of my lord's coming home with his new lady—Look here, I have brought a string of flowers along with me.

Pat. Well, and what then?

Giles. Why I was thinking, if so be as you would come down, as we might take a dance together: little Sal, farmer Harrow's daughter, of the Green, would fain have had me for a partner; but I said as how I'd go for one I liked better; one that I'd make a partner for life.

Pat. Did you say so?

Giles. Yes, and she was struck all of a heap—she had not word to throw to a dog—for Sal and I kept company once for a little bit.

Pat. Farmer, I am going to say something to you, and I desire you will listen to it attentively. It seems you think of our being married together?

Giles. Think! why I think of nothing else. It's all over the place, mun, as how you are to be my spouse; and you would not believe what game folks make of me.

Pat. Shall I talk to you like a friend, farmer? You and I were never designed for one another; and I am morally certain we should not be happy.

Giles. Oh! as for that matter, I never has no words with nobody.

Pat. Shall I speak plainer to you, then?—I don't like you.

Giles. No!

Pat. On the contrary, you are disagreeable to me——

Giles. Am I?

Pat. Yes, of all things: I deal with you sincerely.

Giles. Why, I thought, Miss Pat, the affair between you and I was all fixed and settled!

Pat. Well, let this undeceive you—Be assured we shall never be man and wife. No offer shall persuade, no command force me—You know my mind, make your advantage of it.

AIR.

Was I sure a life to lend,
Wretched as the vilest slave,
Every hardship would I brave;
Rudest toil, severest need;
Ere yield my hand so coolly,
To the man who never truly
Could my heart in keeping have.

Wealth with others success will insure you,
Where your wit and your person may please;
Take to them your love, I conjure you,
And in mercy set me at ease.

[*Exit.*

Giles. Here's a turn! I don't know what to make of it: she's gone mad, that's for sartin—wit and learning have cracked her brain—Poor soul! poor soul! It is often the case of those who have too much of them. Lord, Lord, how sorry I be! But hold, she says I hoint to her mind—mayn't all this be the effect of modish coyness, to do like the gentlewomen, because she was bred among them? And I have heard say, they will be upon their vixen tricks, till they go into the very church with a man. Icod, there's nothing more likelier; for it is the cry of the

and all, that she's the moral of a lady in every thing: and our farmers' daughters, for the matter of that, tho'f they have nothing to boast of but a scrap of red ribbon about their hats, will have as many turnings and windings as a hare, before one can lay a fast hold of them. There can no harm come of speaking with Master Fairfield, however. Odd rabbit it, how plaguy tart she was! I am half vext with myself now, that I let her go off so.

AIR.

When a maid, in way of marriage,
First is courted by a man,
Let 'un do the best he can,
She's so shame-faced in her carriage,
'Tis with pain the suit's began.

Tho'f mayhap she likes him mainly,
Still she shams it coy and cold;
Fearing to confess it plainly,
Lest the folks should think her bold.

But the parson comes in sight,
Gives the word to bill and coo;
'Tis a different story quite,
And she quickly buckles too.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Changes to a view of LORD AIMWORTH'S *house, and improvements: a seat under a tree, and part of the garden wall, with a Chinese pavilion over it. Several country people appear dancing, others looking on; among whom are,* MERVIN, *disguised,* RALPH, FANNY, *and a number of gipsies. After the dancers go off,* THEODOSIA *and* PATTY *enter through a gate, supposed to have a connection with the principal building.*

The. Well, then, my dear Patty, you will run away from us? but why in such a hurry? I have a thousand things to say to you.

Pat. I shall do myself the honour to pay my duty to you some other time, madam; at present I really find myself a little indisposed.

The. Nay, I would by no means lay you under any restraint. But, methinks, the entertainment we have just been taking part of, should have put you into better spirits: I am not in an over-merry mood myself; yet, I swear, I could not look on the diversion of those honest folks, without feeling a certain *gaieté de cœur.*

Pat. Why, indeed, madam, it had one circumstance attending it, which is often wanting to more polite amusements; that of seeming to give undissembled satisfaction to those who were engaged in it.

The. Oh, infinite, infinite! to see the chearful, healthy-looking creatures, toil with such a good will! To me, there were more genuine charms in their aukward stumping and jumping about, their rude measures, and homespun finery, than in all the dress, splendour, and studied graces, of a birth-night ball-room.

Pat. 'Tis a very uncommon declaration to be made by a fine lady, madam: but certainly, however the artful delicacies of high life may dazzle and surprise, nature has particular attractions, even in a cottage, her most unadorned state, which seldom fail to affect us, though we can scarce give a reason for it.

The. But you know, Patty, I was always a distracted admirer of the country; no damsel in romance was ever fonder of groves and purling streams: had I been born in the days of Arcadia, with my present propensity, instead of being a fine lady, as you call me, I should certainly have kept a flock of sheep.

Pat. Well, madam, you have the sages, poets, and philosophers, of all ages, to countenance your way of thinking.

The. And you, my little philosophical friend, don't you think me in the right, too?

Pat. Yes, indeed, madam, perfectly.

AIR.

Trust me, would you taste true pleasure,
Without mixture, without measure,
No where shall you find the treasure
Sure as in the sylvan scene:

Blest, who, no false glare requiring,
Nature's rural sweets admiring,
Can, from grosser joys retiring,
Seek the simple and serene. [*Exit* PATTY.

MERVIN *and* FANNY *come forward.*

Mer. Yonder she is seated; and, to my wish, most fortunately alone. Accost her, as I desired.

The. Heigh!

Fan. Heaven bless you, my sweet lady! bless your honour's beautiful visage, and send you a good husband, and a great many of them!

The. A very comfortable wish, upon my word: who are you, child?

Fan. A poor gipsey, an' please you, that goes about, begging from charitable gentlemen and ladies—If you have ere a coal or a bit of whiting in your pocket, I'll write you the first letter of your sweetheart's name; how many husbands you will have, and how many children, my lady: or, if you will let me look at your line of life, I'll tell you whether it will be long or short, happy or miserable.

The. Oh! as for that, I know it already—— you cannot tell me any good fortune, and therefore, I'll hear none. Go about your business.

Mer. Stay, madam, stay, [*Pretending to lift a paper from the ground.*] you have dropt some-

thing———Fan, call the young gentlewoman back.

Fan. Lady, you have lost———

The. Pho, pho, I have lost nothing.

Mer. Yes, that paper, lady; you dropt it as you got up from the chair. Fan, give it to her honour.

The. A letter with my address! [*Takes the paper and reads.*] 'Dear Theodosia! Though the 'sight of me was so disagreeable to you, that you 'charged me never to approach you more, I hope 'my hand writing can have nothing to frighten 'or disgust you. I am not far off; and the per-'son, who delivers you this, can give you intelli-'gence.' Come hither, child! do you know any thing of the gentleman that wrote this?

Fan. My lady——

The. Make haste—run this moment—bring me to him—bring him to me! say I wait with impatience; tell him I will go, fly any where—

Mer. My life, my charmer!

The. O, Heavens! Mr Mervin!

Enter SIR HARRY *and* LADY SYCAMORE.

Lady Syc. Sir Harry, don't walk so fast, we are not running for a wager.

Sir Har. Hough, hough, hough!

Lady Syc. Hey day, you have got a cough—I shall have you laid upon my hands presently.

Sir Har. No, no, my lady; it is only the old affair.

Lady Syc. Come here, and let me tye this handkerchief about your neck; you have put yourself into a muck sweat already. [*Ties a handkerchief about his neck.*] Have you taken your Bardana this morning? I warrant you not now, though you have been complaining of twitches two or three times; and you know the gouty season is coming on.———Why will you be so neglectful of your health, sir Harry? I protest I am forced to watch you like an infant.

Sir Har. My lovely takes care of me, and I am obliged to her.

Lady Syc. Well, but you ought to mind me, then, since you are satisfied I never speak but for your good. I thought, Miss Sycamore, you were to have followed your papa and me into the garden. How far did you go with that wench?

The. They are gipsies, madam, they say. Indeed, I don't know what they are.

Lady Syc. I wish, miss, you would learn to give a rational answer———

Sir Har. Eh! what's that? gipsies! Have we gipsies here? Vagrants, that pretend to a knowledge of future events; diviners, fortune-tellers?

Fan. Yes, your worship, we'll tell your fortune, or her ladyship's, for a crum of bread, or a little broken victuals: what you throw to your dogs, an' please you.

Sir Har. Broken victuals, hussy! How do you think we should have broken victuals? If we were at home, indeed, perhaps you might get some such thing from the cook: but here we are only on a visit to a friend's house, and have nothing to do with the kitchen at all.

Lady Syc. And do you think, sir Harry, it is necessary to give the creature an account?

Sir Har. No, love, no! but what can you say to obstinate people? Get you gone, bold face! I once knew a merchant's wife in the city, my lady, who had her fortune told by some of those gipsies. They said she should die at such a time; and I warrant, as sure as the day came, the poor gentlewoman actually died with the conceit. Come, Dossy, your mamma and I are going to take a walk. My lady, will you have hold of my arm?

Lady Syc. No, sir Harry, I choose to go by myself.

Mer. Now, love, assist me! [*Turning to the gipsies.*] Follow, and take all your cues from me——Nay, but good lady and gentleman, you won't go without remembering the poor gipsies!

Sir Har. Hey! here is all the gang after us.

Gip. Pray, your noble honour!

Lady Syc. Come back into the garden; we shall be covered with vermin.

Gip. Out of the bowels of your commisseration!

Lady Syc. They press on us more and more: yet that girl has no mind to leave them: I shall swoon away!

Sir Har. Don't be frightened, my lady; let me advance.

AIR.

You vile pack of vagabonds! what do you mean?
I'll maul you, rascallions,
Ye tatter-demallions———
If one of you come within reach of my cane.

Such cursed assurance,
'Tis past all endurance.
Nay, nay, pray come away,
They're liars and thieves,
And he that believes
Their foolish predictions,
Will find them but fictions,
A bubble, that always deceives.

Fan. Oh, mercy, dear! The gentleman is so bold, 'tis well if he does not bring us into trouble. Who knows but this may be a justice of peace! and see, he's following them into the garden!

1*st Gip.* Well, 'tis all your seeking, Fan.

Fan. We shall have warrants to take us up, I'll be hanged else! We had better run away;

the servants will come out with sticks to lick us.

Mer. Cursed ill-fortune! [*Here* MERVIN *returns with gipsies.*] She's gone, and, perhaps, I shall not have another opportunity—And you, ye blundering blockhead! I won't give you a half-penny—Why did you not clap to the 'garden door, when I called to you, before the young lady got in? The key was on the outside, which would have given me some time for an explanation.

2d Gip. An' please your honour, I was dubus.

Mer. Dubus! plague choak ye! However, it is some satisfaction that I have been able to let her see me, and know where I am. [*Turning to the gipsies, who go off.*] Go, get you gone, all of you, about your business!

The. Disappeared, fled! [THEODOSIA *appears in the pavillion.*] Oh, how unlucky this is!—Could he not have patience to wait a moment?

Mer. I know not what to resolve on.

The. Hem!

Mer. I'll go back to the garden-door.

The. Mr Mervin!

Mer. What do I see! 'Tis she, 'tis she herself! Oh, Theodosia! Shall I climb the wall, and come up to you?

The. No; speak softly: sir Harry and my lady sit below at the end of the walk—How much am I obliged to you for taking this trouble!

Mer. When their happiness is at stake, what is it men will not attempt? Say but you love me!

The. What proof would you have me give you? I know of but one: if you please I am willing to go off with you.

Mer. Are you? Would to Heaven I had brought a carriage!

The. How did you come? Have you not horses?

Mer. No; there is another misfortune. To avoid suspicion, there being but one little public-house in the village, I dispatched my servant with them, about an hour ago, to wait for me at a town twelve miles distant, whither I pretended to go; but, alighting a mile off, I equipt myself, and came back as you see; neither can we, nearer than this town, get a post-chaise.

The. You say you have made a confidant of the miller's son:—return to your place of rendezvous:—my father has been asked this moment, by lord Aimworth, who is in the garden, to take a walk with him down to the mill: they will go before dinner: and it shall be hard if I cannot contrive to be one of the company.

Mer. And what then?

The. Why, in the mean time, you may devise some method to carry me from hence: and I'll take care you shall have an opportunity of communicating it to me.

Mer. Well, but dear Theodosia——

AIR.

The. Hist, hist! I hear my mother call——
Prithee be gone;
We'll meet anon:
Catch this, and this——
Blow me a kiss
In pledge of promised truth, that's all.
Farewell!——and yet a moment stay;
Something beside I had to say:——
We'll, 'tis forgot;
No matter what——
Love grant us grace!
The mill's the place:
She calls again, I must away. [*Exit.*

Enter FANNY.

Fan. Please your honour, you were so kind as to say you would remember my fellow-travellers for their trouble: and they think I have gotten the money.

Mer. Oh, here; give them this—[*Gives her money.*] And for you, my dear little pilot, you have brought me so cleverly through my bussiness, that I must——

Fan. Oh, Lord!—your honour—[MERVIN *kisses her.*] Pray don't——kiss me again.

Mer. Again, and again.——There's a thought come into my head.—Theodosia will certainly have no objection to putting on the dress of a sister of mine.—So, and so only, we may escape to-night.—This girl, for a little money, will provide us with necessaries——

Fan. Dear gracious! I warrant you, now, I am as red as my petticoat: why would you royster and touzle one so?—If Ralph was to see you, he'd be as jealous as the vengeance.

Mer. Hang Ralph! Never mind him.—There's a guinea for thee.

Fan. What, a golden guinea?——

Mer. Yes; and if thou art a good girl, and do as I desire thee, thou shalt have twenty.

Fan. Ay, but not all gold.

Mer. As good as that is.

Fan. Shall I though, if I does as you bids me?

Mer. You shall.

Fan. Precious heart! He's a sweet gentleman!—Icod I have a great mind——

Mer. What art thou thinking about?

Fan. Thinking, your honour?—Ha, ha, ha!

Mer. Indeed, so merry!

Fan. I don't know what I am thinking about, not I—Ha, ha, ha!—Twenty guineas!

Mer. I tell thee thou shalt have them.

Fan. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mer. By Heaven, I am serious!

Fan. Ha, ha, ha!—Why hen I'll do whatever your honour pleases.

Mer. Stay here a little, to see that all keeps

quiet: you'll find me presently at the mill, where we talk farther.

AIR.

Yes, 'tis decreed, thou maid divine!
I must, I will possess thee:
Oh, what delight within my arms to press thee!
To kiss, and call thee mine!
Let me this only bliss enjoy;
That ne'er can waste, that ne'er can cloy:
All other pleasures I resign.

Why should we dally,
Stand shilli shally?
Let fortune smile or frown!
Love will attend us;
Love will befriend us;
And all our wishes crown. [*Exit.*

Enter RALPH.

Fan. What a dear kind soul he is!—Here comes Ralph—I can tell him, unless he makes me his lawful wife, as he has often said he would, the devil a word more shall he speak to me.

Ralph. So, Fan, where's the gentleman?

Fan. How should I know where he is? what do you ask me for?

Ralph. There's no harm in putting a civil question, be there? Why you look as cross and ill-natured——

Fan. Well, mayhap I do—and mayhap I have where-withal for it.

Ralph. Why, has the gentleman offered any thing uncivil? Ecod, I'd try a bout as soon as look at him.

Fan. He offer!—no—he's a gentleman every inch of him; but you are sensible, Ralph, you have been promising me, a great while, this, and that, and t'other; and, when all comes to all, I don't see but you are like the rest of them.

Ralph. Why, what is it I have promised?

Fan. To marry me in the church, you have, a hundred times.

Ralph. Well, and mayhap I will, if you'll have patience.

Fan. Patience me no patience! you may do it now, if you please.

Ralph. Well, but suppose I don't please? I tell you, Fan, you're a fool, and want to quarrel with your bread and butter; I have had anger enow from feyther already upon your account, and you want me to come by more. As I said, if you have patience, mayhap things may fall out, and mayhap not.

Fan. With all my heart, then; and now I know your mind, you may go hang yourself.

Ralph. Ay, ay!

Fan. Yes, you may—who cares for you?

Ralph. Well, and who cares for you, an you go to that?

Fan. A menial feller—Go mind your mill and your drudgery; I don't think you worthy to wipe my shoes—feller.

Ralph. Nay, but Fan, keep a civil tongue in your head: odds flesh! I would fain know what fly bites all of a sudden now!

Fan. Marry come up, the best gentlemens' sons in the country have made me proffers; and if one is a miss, be a miss to a gentleman, I say, that will give one fine clothes, and take one to see the show, and put money in one's pocket.

Ralph. Whu, whu—[*She hits him a slap.*] What's that for?

Fan. What do you whistle for, then? Do you think I am a dog?

Ralph. Never trust me, Fan, if I have not a mind to give you, with this switch in my hand here, as good a lacing———

Fan. Touch me, if you dare! touch me, and I'll swear my life against you.

Ralph. A murrain! with her damned little fist as hard as she could draw!

Fan. Well, it's good enough for you; I'm not necessitated to take up with the impudence of such a low-lived monkey as you are.—A gentleman's my friend, and I can have twenty guineas in my hand, all as good as this is.

Ralph. Belike from this Londoner, eh?

Fan. Yes, from him—so you may take your promise of marriage; I don't value it that—[*Spits.*] and if you speak to me, I'll slap your chops again.

AIR.

Lord, sir! you seem mighty uneasy;
But I the refusal can bear:
I warrant I shall not run crazy,
Nor die in a fit of despair.
If so you suppose, you're mistaken;
For, sir, for to let you to know,
I'm not such a maiden forsaken,
But I have two strings to my bow. [*Exit.*

Ralph. Indeed! Now I'll be judged by any soul living in the world, if ever there was a viler piece of treachery than this here! there is no such thing as a true friend upon the face of the globe, and so I have said a hundred times! A couple of base, deceitful——after all my love and kindness shewn! Well, I'll be revenged; see an I be'nt——Master Marvint, that's his name, an he do not sham it—he has come here and disguised unself; whereof 'tis contrary to law so to do: besides, I do partly know why he did it; and I'll fish out the whole conjuration, and go up to the castle and tell every syllable; shan't carry a wench from me, were he twenty times the man he is, and twenty times to that again; and moreover than so, the first time I

meet un, I'll knock un down, tho'f 'twas before my lord himself; and he may capias me for it afterwards, an he will.

AIR.

As they count me such a ninny,
So to let them rule the roast,
I'll bet any one a guinea
They have scored without their host.
But if I don't shew them, in lieu of it,
A trick that's fairly worth two of it,
Then let me pass for a fool and an ass.

To be sure yon sly cajoler
Thought the work as good as done,
When he found the little stroller
Was so easy to be won.
But if I don't shew him in lieu of it,
A trick that's fairly worth two of it,
Then let me pass for a fool or an ass. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Changes to a room in the mill; two chairs, with a table and a tankard of beer.*

Enter FAIRFIELD *and* GILES.

Fair. In short, farmer, I don't know what to say to thee. I have spoken to her all I can; but I think children were born to pull the grey hairs of their parents to the grave with sorrow.

Giles. Nay, Master Fairfield, don't take on about it! belike Miss Pat has another love: and, if so, in Heaven's name be't: what's one man's meat, as the saying is, is another man's poison; and tho'f some might find me well enough to their fancy, yet in case I don't suit her's, why there's no harm done.

Fair. Well but, neighbour, I have put that to her; and the story is, she has no inclination to marry any one; all she desires is, to stay at home, and take care of me.

Giles. Master Fairfield—here's towards your good health!

Fair. Thank thee, friend Giles——and here's towards thine!——I promise thee, had things gone as we proposed, thou should'st have had one half of what I was worth, to the uttermost farthing.

Giles. Why to be sure, Master Fairfield, I am not the less obligated to your good-will; but, as to that matter, had I married, it should not have been for the lucre of gain; but if I do like a girl, do you see, I do like her; ay, and I'd take her, saving respect, if she had not a second petticoat.

Fair. Well said—where love is, with a little industry, what have a young couple to be afraid of? And, by the Lord Harry, for all that's past, I cannot help thinking we shall bring our matters to bear yet—Young women, you know, friend Giles——

Giles. Why, that's what I have been thinking with myself, Master Fairfield.

Fair. Come, then, mend thy draught—Deuce take me if I let it drop so——But, in any case, don't you go to make yourself uneasy.

Giles. Uneasy, Master Fairfield! what good would that do?—For sartin, seeing how things were, I should have been very glad they had gone accordingly: but if they change, 'tis no fault of mine you know.

AIR.

Zooks! why should I sit down and grieve?
No case so hard, there mayn't be had
Some medicine to relieve.

Here's what masters all disasters:
With a cup of nut-brown beer,
Thus my drooping thoughts I cheer:
If one pretty damsel fail me,
From another I may find
Return more kind;
What a murrain then should ail me!
All girls are not of a mind.

He's a child that whimpers for a toy;
So here's to thee, honest boy! [*Exit.*

Enter LORD AIMWORTH.

Fair. O the goodness, his lordship's honour! You are come into a littered place, my noble sir—the arm-chair——will it please your honour to repose you on this, till a better——

Lord Aim. Thank you, miller; there's no occasion for either. I only want to speak a few words to you, and have company waiting for me without.

Fair. Without!—won't their honours favour my poor hovel so far——

Lord Aim. No, miller, let them stay where they are.—I find you are about marrying your daughter—I know the great regard my mother had for her; and am satisfied, that nothing but her sudden death could have prevented her leaving her a handsome provision.

Fair. Dear my lord, your noble mother, you, and all your family, have heaped favours on favours on my poor child.

Lord Aim. Whatever has been done for her, she has fully merited.

Fair. Why, to be sure, my lord, she is a very good girl.

Lord Aim. Poor old man!—but those are tears of satisfaction. Here, Master Fairfield, to bring matters to a short conclusion, here is a bill of a thousand pounds. Portion your daughter with what you think convenient of it.

Fair. A thousand pounds, my lord! Pray, excuse me! excuse me, worthy sir; too much has been done already, and we have no pretensions——

Lord Aim. I insist upon your taking it. Put it up, and say no more.

Fair. Well, my lord, if it must be so—but indeed, indeed—

Lord Aim. In this I only fulfil what, I am satisfied, would please my mother. As to myself, I shall take upon me all the expences of Patty's wedding, and have already given orders about it.

Fair. Alas, sir, you are too good, too generous; but I fear we shall not be able to profit of your kind intentions, unless you will condescend to speak a little to Patty.

Lord Aim. How speak!

Fair. Why, my lord, I thought we had pretty well ordered all things concerning this marriage; but, all on a sudden, the girl has taken it into her head not to have the farmer, and declares, she will never marry at all. But I know, my lord, she'll pay great respect to any thing you say: and if you'll but lay your commands on her to marry him, I'm sure she'll do it.

Lord Aim. Who, I lay my commands on her!

Fair. Yes, pray, my lord, do; I'll send her in to you.

Lord Aim. Master Fairfield! [FAIRFIELD *goes out, and returns.*]—What can be the meaning of this?—Refuse to marry the farmer! How, why? My heart is thrown in an agitation; while every step I take, serves but to lead me into new perplexities.

Fair. She's coming, my lord; I said you were here; and I humbly beg you will tell her, you insist upon the match going forward; tell her, you insist upon it, my lord, and speak a little angrily to her. [*Exit.*

Enter PATTY.

Lord Aim. I came hither, Patty, in consequence of our conversation this morning, to render your change of state as agreeable and happy as I could: but your father tells me, you have fallen out with the farmer: has any thing happened, since I saw you last, to alter your good opinion of him?

Pat. No, my lord, I am in the same opinion with regard to the farmer now, as I always was.

Lord Aim. I thought, Patty, you loved him. You told me———

Pat. My lord!

Lord Aim. Well, no matter—It seems I have been mistaken in that particular—Possibly your affections are engaged elsewhere: let me but know the man that can make you happy, and I swear———

Pat. Indeed, my lord, you take too much trouble upon my account.

Lord Aim. Perhaps, Patty, you love somebody so much beneath you, you are ashamed to own it; but your esteem confers a value wheresoever it is placed. I was too harsh with you this morning: our inclinations are not in our own power; they master the wisest of us.

Pat. Pray, pray, my lord, talk not to me in this style: consider me as one destined, by birth and fortune, to the meanest condition and offices; who has unhappily been apt to imbibe sentiments contrary to them! Let me conquer a heart, where pride and vanity have usurped an improper rule; and learn to know myself, of whom I have been too long ignorant.

Lord Aim. Perhaps, Patty, you love one so much above you, you are afraid to own it—If so, be his rank what it will, he is to be envied: for the love of a woman of virtue, beauty, and sentiment, does honour to a monarch. What means that downcast look, those tears, those blushes? Dare you not confide in me? Do you think, Patty, you have a friend in the world would sympathize with you more sincerely than I?

Pat. What shall I answer?—No, my lord, you have ever treated me with a kindness, a generosity, of which none but minds like yours are capable: you have been my instructor, my adviser, my protector: but, my lord, you have been too good. When our superiors forget the distance between us, we are sometimes led to forget it too: had you been less condescending, perhaps I had been happier.

Lord Aim. And have I, Patty, have I made you unhappy? I, who would sacrifice my own felicity, to secure your's?

Pat. I beg, my lord, you will suffer me to be gone: only believe me sensible of all your favours, though unworthy of the smallest.

Lord Aim. How unworthy!—You merit every thing: my respect, my esteem, my friendship, and my love! Yes, I repeat, I avow it: your beauty, your modesty, your understanding, have made a conquest of my heart. But what a world do we live in! that, while I own this; while I own a passion for you, founded on the justest, the noblest basis, I must at the same time confess, the fear of that world, its taunts, its reproaches—

Pat. Ah, sir, think better of the creature you have raised, than to suppose I ever entertained a hope tending to your dishonour! would that be a return for the favours I have received? Would that be a grateful reverence for the memory of her—Pity and pardon the disturbance of a mind, that fears to inquire too minutely into its own sensations. I am unfortunate, my lord, but not criminal.

Lord Aim. Patty, we are both unfortunate: for my own part, I know not what to say to you, or what to propose to myself.

Pat. Then, my lord, 'tis mine to act as I ought: yet, while I am honoured with a place in your esteem, imagine me not insensible of so high a

distinction; or capable of lightly turning my thought towards another.

Lord Aim. How cruel is my situation!—I am here, Patty, to command you to marry the man, who has given you so much uneasiness.

Pat. My lord, I am convinced it is for your credit, and my safety, it should be so: I hope I have not so ill profited by the lessons of your noble mother, but I shall be able to do my duty, whenever I am called to it: this will be my first support; time and reflection will complete the work.

AIR.

Cease, oh cease, to overwhelm me,
With excess of bounty rare;
What am I? What have I? Tell me,
To deserve your meanest care?
'Gainst our fate in vain's resistance,
Let me then no grief disclose;
But resigned, at humble distance,
Offer vows for your repose. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR HARRY SYCAMORE, THEODOSIA, *and* GILES.

Sir Har. No justice of peace, no bailiffs, no head borough!

Lord Aim. What's the matter, sir Harry?

Sir Har. The matter, my lord!—While I was examining the construction of the mill without, for I have some small notion of mechanics, Miss Sycamore had like to have been run away with by a gipsey man.

The. Dear papa, how can you talk so? Did not I tell you it was at my own desire the poor fellow went to shew me the canal?

Sir Har. Hold your tongue, miss! I don't know any business you had to let him come near you at all: we have staid so long, too; your mama gave us but half an hour, and she'll be frightened out of her wits—she'll think some accident has happened to me.

Lord Aim. I'll wait upon you when you please.

Sir Har. O! but, my lord, here's a poor fellow; it seems his mistress has conceived some disgust against him: pray has her father spoke to you to interpose your authority in his behalf?

Giles. If his lordship's honour would be so kind, I would acknowledge the favour as far as in me lay.

Sir Har. Let me speak—[*Takes* LORD AIMWORTH *aside.*]—a word or two in your lordship's ear?

The. Well, I do like this gipsey scheme prodigiously, if we can but put it into execution as happily as we have contrived it!—

Enter PATTY.

So, my dear Patty, you see I am come to return your visit very soon; but this is only a call *en passant*—will you be at home after dinner?

Pat. Certainly, madam, whenever you condescend to honour me so far: but it is what I cannot expect.

The. O fye! why not?——

Giles. Your servant, Miss Patty!

Pat. Farmer, your servant.

Sir Har. Here, you goodman delver, I have done your business; my lord has spoke, and your fortune's made: a thousand pounds at present, and better things to come; his lordship says he will be your friend.

Giles. I do hope, then, Miss Pat will make all up.

Sir Har. Miss Pat, make up! stand out of the way, I'll make it up.

The quarrels of lovers, adds me! they're a jest;
Come hither, ye blockhead, come hither!
So now, let us leave them together.

Lord Aim. Farewell, then!
Pat. For ever!
Giles. I vow and protest,
'Twas kind of his honour,
To gain thus upon her;
We're so much beholden, it can't be exprest.
The. I feel something here,
'Twixt hoping and fear:
Haste, haste, friendly night,
To shelter our flight——
Lord Aim. } A thousand distractions are rend-
Pat. } ing my breast.
Pat. O mercy!
Giles. Oh dear!
Sir Har. Why, miss, will you mind when you're spoke to, or not?
Must I stand in waiting,
While you're here a-prating?
Lord Aim. } May every felicity fall to your lot!
The. }
Giles. She curtsies!—Look there,
What a shape, what an air!—
All. How happy, how wretched! how tired am I!
Your lordship's obedient; your servant; good bye!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The portico to* LORD AIMWORTH'S *house.*

Enter LORD AIMWORTH, SIR HARRY, *and* LADY SYCAMORE.

Lady Syc. A WRETCH! a vile inconsiderate wretch! coming of such a race as mine, and having an example like me before her!

Lord Aim. I beg, madam, you will not disquiet yourself: you are told here, that a gentleman lately arrived from London has been about the place to-day; that he has disguised himself like a gypsey, came hither, and had some conversation with your daughter; you are even told, that there is a design formed for their going off together; but possibly there may be some mistake in all this.

Sir Har. Ay, but my lord, the lad tells us the gentleman's name; we have seen the gypsies; and we know she has had a hankering——

Lady Syc. Sir Harry, my dear, why will you put in your word, when you hear others speaking?—I protest, my lord, I'm in such confusion, I know not what to say, I can hardly support myself.

Lord Aim. This gentleman, it seems, is at a little inn at the bottom of the hill.

Sir Har. I wish it was possible to have a file of musqueteers, my lord; I could head them myself, being in the militia: and we would go and seize him directly.

Lord Aim. Softly, my dear sir; let us proceed with a little less violence in this matter, I beseech you. We should first see the young lady—Where is Miss Sycamore, madam?

Lady Syc. Really, my lord, I don't know; I saw her go into the garden about a quarter of an hour ago, from our chamber window.

Sir Har. Into the garden! perhaps she has got an inkling of our being informed of this affair, and is gone to throw herself into the pond. Despair, my lord, makes girls do terrible things. 'Twas but the Wednesday before we left London, that I saw, taken out of Rosamond's pond, in St James's Park, as likely a young woman as ever you would desire to set your eyes on, in a new callimanco petticoat, and a pair of silver buckles in her shoes.

Lord Aim. I hope there is no danger of any such fatal accident happening at present; but will you oblige me, sir Harry?

Sir Har. Surely, my lord——

Lord Aim. Will you commit the whole direction of this affair to my prudence?

Sir Har. My dear, you hear what his lordship says.

Lady Syc. Indeed, my lord, I am so much ashamed, I don't know what to answer; the fault of my daughter——

Lord Aim. Don't mention it, madam; the fault has been mine, who have been innocently the occasion of a young lady's transgressing a point of duty and decorum; which, otherwise, she never would have violated. But if you and sir Harry will walk in and repose yourselves, I hope to settle every thing to the general satisfaction.

Lady Syc. Come in, sir Harry. [*Exit.*

Lord Aim. I am sure, my good friend, had I known that I was doing a violence to Miss Sycamore's inclinations, in the happiness I proposed to myself——

Sir Har. My lord, 'tis all a case—My grandfather, by the mother's side, was a very sensible man—he was elected knight of the shire in five successive parliaments; and died high sheriff of his county—a man of fine parts, fine talents, and one of the most curious dockers of horses in all England (but that he did only now and then for his amusement)——And he used to say, my lord, that the female sex were good for nothing, but to bring forth children, and breed disturbance.

Lord Aim. The ladies were very little obliged to your ancestor, sir Harry: but for my part, I have a more favourable opinion——

Sir Har. You are in the wrong, my lord: with submission, you are really in the wrong.

AIR.

To speak my mind of woman kind,
In one word, 'tis this;
By nature they're design'd,
To say and do amiss.

Be they maids, be they wives,
Alike they plague our lives:
Wanton, headstrong, cunning, vain;
Born to cheat, and give men pain.

Their study day and night,
Is mischief, their delight:
And if we should prevent,
At one door, their intent,
They quickly turn about,
And find another out.

[*Exeunt* SIR HAR. *and* LADY SYC.

Enter FAIRFIELD.

Lord Aim. How now, Master Fairfield, what brings you here?

Fair. I am come, my lord, to thank you for your bounty to me and my daughter this morning, and most humbly to intreat your lordship to receive it at our hands again.

Lord Aim. Ay!—why, what's the matter?

Fair. I don't know, my lord; it seems you

generosity to my poor girl has been noised about the neighbourhood; and some evil-minded people have put it into the young man's head, that was to marry her, that you would never have made her a present so much above her deserts and expectations, if it had not been upon some naughty account: now, my lord, I am a poor man, 'tis true, and a mean one; but I and my father, and my father's father, have lived tenants upon your lordship's estate, where we have always been known for honest men; and it shall never be said, that Fairfield, the miller, became rich in his old days, by the wages of his child's shame.

Lord Aim. What then, Master Fairfield, do you believe——

Fair. No, my lord! no, Heaven forbid! but when I consider the sum, it is too much for us; it is indeed, my lord, and enough to make bad folks talk: besides, my poor girl is greatly altered; she used to be the life of every place she came into; but, since her being at home, I have seen nothing from her but sadness and watery eyes.

Lord Aim. The farmer, then, refuses to marry Patty, notwithstanding their late reconciliation?

Fair. Yes, my lord, he does indeed; and has made a wicked noise, and used us in a very base manner: I did not think farmer Giles would have been so ready to believe such a thing of us.

Lord Aim. Well, Master Fairfield, I will not press on you a donation, the rejection of which does you so much credit; you may take my word, however, that your fears upon this occasion are entirely groundless. But this is not enough; as I have been the means of losing your daughter one husband, it is but just I should get her another; and, since the farmer is so scrupulous, there is a young man in the house here, whom I have some influence over, and, I dare say, he will be less squeamish.

Fair. To be sure, my lord, you have, in all honest ways, a right to dispose of me and mine as you think proper.

Lord Aim. Go then immediately, and bring Patty hither; I shall not be easy, till I have given you entire satisfaction. But, stay and take a letter, which I am stepping into my study to write: I'll order a chaise to be got ready, that you may go back and forward with greater expedition.

AIR.

Let me fly!——Hence, tyrant fashion!
Teach to servile minds your law;
Curb in them each gen'rous passion,
Ev'ry motion keep in awe.

Shall I, in thy trammels going,
Quit the idol of my heart?
While it beats, all fervent, glowing,
With my life I'll sooner part.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Enter FANNY, *following* RALPH.

Fan. Ralph, Ralph!

Ralph. What do you want with me, eh?

Fan. Lord! I never knowed such a man as you are, since I comed into the world! a body can't speak to you, but you falls strait ways into a passion: I followed you up from the house, only you ran so, there was no such a thing as overtaking you, and I have been waiting there at the back door ever so long.

Ralph. Well, and now you may go and wait at the fore door, if you like it: but I forewarn you and your gang, not to keep lurking about our mill any longer; for if you do, I'll send the constable after you, and have you, every mother's skin, clapt into the county gaol. You are such a pack of thieves, one can't hang so much as a rag to dry for you: it was but the other day, that a couple of them came into our kitchen to beg a handful of dirty flour to make them cakes, and, before the wench could turn about, they had whipped off three brass candlesticks, and a pot-lid.

Fan. Well, sure it was not I.

Ralph. Then, you know that old rascal, that you call father? the last time I catched him laying snares for the hares, I told him I'd inform the game-keeper; and I'll expose all——

Fan. Ah, dear Ralph! don't be angry with me!

Ralph. Yes, I will be angry with you—what do you come nigh me for?—You shan't touch me—There's the skirt of my coat, and if you do but lay a finger on it, my lord's bailiff is here in the court, and I'll call him and give you to him.

Fan. If you'll forgive me, I'll go down on my knees!

Ralph. I tell you I won't!—No, no; follow your gentleman; or go live upon your old fare, crows and polecats, and sheep that die of the rot; pick the dead fowl off the dung-hills, and squench your thirst at the next ditch; 'tis the fittest liquor to wash down such dainties—skulking about from barn to barn, and lying upon wet straw, on commons, and in green lanes—go and be whipt from parish to parish, as you used to be.

Fan. How can you talk so unkind?

Ralph. And see whether you will get what will keep you as I did, by telling of fortunes, and coming with pillows under your apron among the young farmers' wives, to make believe you are a breeding, with 'the Lord Almighty bless 'you, sweet mistress! you cannot tell how soon it 'may be your own case.' You know I am acquainted with all your tricks—and how you turn

up the whites of your eyes, pretending you were struck blind by thunder and lightning!

Fan. Pray, don't be angry, Ralph!

Ralph. Yes, but I will though; spread your cobwebs to catch flies; I am an old wasp, and don't value them a button.

AIR.

When you meet a tender creature,
Neat in limb, and fair in feature,
Full of kindness and good nature,
Prove as kind again to she;
Happy mortal! to possess her,
In your bosom, warm, and press her,
Morning, noon, and night, caress her,
And be fond as fond can be.

But if one you meet that's froward,
Saucy, jilting, and untoward,
Should you act the whining coward,
'Tis to mend her ne'er the whit:
Nothing's tough enough to bind her;
Then, agog when once you find her,
Let her go, and never mind her:
Heart alive, you're fairly quit.

[*Exit.*

Fan. I wish I had a draught of water. I don't know what's come over me; I have no more strength than a babe; a straw would fling me down.—He has a heart as hard as any parish-officer; I don't doubt now, but he will stand by and see me himself: and we shall all be whipt, and all through my means.—The devil run away with the gentleman, and his twenty guineas too, for leading me astray! If I had known Ralph would have taken it so, I would have hanged myself before I would have said a word—but I thought he had no more gall than a pigeon.

AIR.

O! what a simpleton was I,
To make my bed at such a rate!
Now lay thee down, vain fool, and cry,
Thy true love seeks another mate.

No tears, alack!
Will call him back,
No tender words his heart allure;
I could bite
My tongue through spite——
Some plague bewitch'd me, that's for sure.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*Changes to a room in the miller's house.*

Enter GILES, *followed by* PATTY *and* THEODOSIA.

AIR.

Giles. Womens' tongues are like mill-clappers,
And from thence they learn the knack,
Of for ever sounding clack,——
Why, what the plague's the matter with you what do you scold at me for? I am sure I did not say an uncivil word, as I do know of! I'll be judged by the young lady if I did.

Pat. 'Tis very well, farmer; all I desire is, that you will leave the house: you see my father is not at home at present; when he is, if you have any thing to say, you know where to come.

Giles. Enough said; I don't want to stay in the house, not I; and I don't much care, if I had never come into it.

The. For shame, farmer! down on your knees, and beg Miss Fairfield's pardon, for the outrage you have been guilty of.

Giles. Beg pardon, miss! for what?——Icod that's well enough; why I am my own master, be'nt I?—If I have no mind to marry, there's no harm in that, I hope: 'tis only changing hands. —This morning she would not have me; and now I won't have she.

Pat. Have you!—Heaven and earth! do you think, then, 'tis the missing of you, that gives me concern? No: I would prefer a state of beggary a thousand times beyond any thing I could enjoy with you! and be assured, if ever I was seemingly consenting to such a sacrifice, nothing should have compelled me to it, but the cruelty of my situation.

Giles. Oh, as for that, I believes you; but you see the gudgeon would not bite, as I told you a bit agone, you know; we farmers never love to reap what we don't sow.

Pat. You brutish fellow, how dare you talk?—

Giles. So, now she's in her tantrums again, and all for no manner of yearthly thing!

Pat. But, be assured, my lord will punish you severely for daring to make free with his name.

Giles. Who made free with it? did I ever mention my lord? 'Tis a cursed lie!

The. Bless me! farmer!

Giles. Why it is, miss——and I'll make her prove her words——Then, what does she mean by being punished? I am not afraid of nobody, nor beholden to nobody, that I know of: while I pays my rent, my money, I believe, is as good as another's: egad, if it goes there, I think there be those deserve to be punished more than I.

Pat. Was ever unfortunate creature pursued as I am, by distresses and vexations?

The. My dear Patty!—See, farmer, you have thrown her into tears—Pray, be comforted.

AIR.

Pat. Oh leave me, in pity! The falsehood I scorn;
For slander the bosom untainted defies:
But rudeness and insult are not to be borne,
Though offer'd by wretches we've cause to despise.

Of woman defenceless, how cruel the fate!
Pass ever so cautious, so blameless her way,
Nature, and envy, lurk always in wait,
And innocence falls to their fury a prey.
[*Exeunt* PATTY *and* GILES.

Enter MERVIN.

The. You are a pretty gentleman, are not you, to suffer a lady to be at a rendezvous before you?

Mer. Difficulties, my dear, and dangers——None of the company had two suits of apparel; so I was obliged to purchase a rag of one, and a tatter from another, at the expence of ten times the sum they would fetch at the paper-mill.

The. Well, where are they?

Mer. Here, in this bundle——and, though I say it, a very decent habiliment, if you have art enough to stick the parts together: I've been watching till the coast was clear to bring them to you.

The. Let me see——I'll slip into this closet and equip myself——All here is in such confusion, there will no notice be taken.

Mer. Do so; I'll take care nobody shall interrupt you in the progress of your metamorphosis [*She goes in.*]——and if you are not tedious, we may walk off without being seen by any one.

The. Ha! ha! ha!———What a concourse of atoms are here! though, as I live, they are a great deal better than I expected.

Mer. Well, pray make haste; and don't imagine yourself at your toilette now, where mode prescribes two hours, for what reason would scarce allow three minutes.

The. Have patience; the outward garment is on already; and I'll assure you a very good stuff, only a little the worse for the mending.

Mer. Imagine it embroidery, and consider it is your wedding-suit.——Come, how far are you got?

The. Stay, you don't consider there's some contrivance necessary.———Here goes the apron—flounced and furbelowed with a witness!—Alas! alas! is has no strings! what shall I do? Come, no matter, a couple of pins will serve——And now the cap——Oh, mercy! here's a hole in the crown of it large enough to thrust my head through.

Mer. That you'll hide with your straw-hat; or, if you should not—What, not ready yet?

The. Only one minute more——Yes, now the work's accomplished. [*Comes out.*

AIR.

Who'll buy good luck? who'll buy, who'll buy
The gypsey's favours?—Here am I!
Through the village, through the town,
What charming sav'ry scraps we'll earn!
Clean straw shall be our beds of down,
And our withdrawing-room a barn.

Young and old, and grave, and gay,
The miser and the prodigal;
Cit, courtier, bumpkin, come away;
I warrant we'll content you all.

Enter FAIRFIELD *and* GILES.

Mer. Plague, here's somebody coming!

Fair. As to the past, farmer, 'tis past; I bear no malice for any thing thou hast said.

Giles. Why, Master Fairfield, you do know I had a great regard for Miss Patty; but when I came to consider all in all, I finds as how it is not adviseable to change my condition yet awhile.

Fair. Friend Giles, thou art in the right; marriage is a serious point, and can't be considered too warily. Ha! who have we here? Shall I never keep my house clear of these vermin? Look to the goods, there, and give me a horsewhip—by the Lord Harry, I'll make an example!——Come here, Lady Light-fingers! let me see what thou hast stolen.

Mer. Hold, miller, hold!

Fair. O gracious goodness! Sure I know this face—Miss—Young madam Sycamore—Mercy heart, here's a disguise!

The. Discovered!

Mer. Miller, let me speak to you.

The. What ill fortune is this!

Giles. Ill fortune, miss! I think there be nothing but crosses and misfortunes of one kind or other.

Fair. Money to me, sir! not for the world; you want no friends but what you have already——Lack-a-day, lack-a-day! see how luckily I came in: I believe you are the gentleman, to whom I am charged to give this, on the part of my lord Aimworth—Bless you, dear sir, go up to his honour, with my young lady—There is a chaise waiting at the door to carry you——I and my daughter will take another way.

[*Exit* FAIR.

Mer. Prithee, read this letter, and tell me what you think of it.

The. Heavens, 'tis a letter from lord Aimworth! We are betrayed!

Mer. By what means I know not.

The. I am so frighted and flurried, that I have scarce strength enough to read it.

'SIR,

'It is with the greatest concern I find, that I 'have been unhappily the occasion of giving some 'uneasiness to you and Miss Sycamore: be as-'sured, had I been apprized of your prior pre-'tensions, and the young lady's disposition in 'your favour, I should have been the last person

'to interrupt your felicity.' I beg, sir, you will do 'me the favour to come up to my house, where 'I have already so far settled matters, as to be 'able to assure you, that every thing will go en- 'tirely to your satisfaction.'

Mer. Well! What do you think of it? Shall we go the castle? Well!

The. Well!

Mer. What do you think of it?

The. Nay, what do you think of it?

Mer. Egad, I can't very well tell—However, on the whole, I believe it would be wrong of us to proceed any further in our design of running away, even if the thing was practicable.

The. I am entirely of your opinion. I swear this lord Aimworth is a charming man! I fancy 'tis lucky for you I had not been long enough acquainted with him, to find out all his good qualities. But how the deuce came he to hear—

Mer. No matter; after this, there can be nothing to apprehend. What do you say? shall we go up to the castle?

The. By all means! and in this very trim; to show what we were capable of doing, if my father and mother had not come to reason. But, perhaps, the difficulties being removed may lessen your *penchant*: you men are such unaccountable mortals. Do you love me well enough to marry me, without making a frolic of it?

Mer. Do I love you!

The. Ay; and to what degree?

Mer. Why do you ask me?

AIR.

Who upon the oozy beech,
Can count the num'rous sands that lie?
Or distinctly reckon each
Transparent orb that studs the sky?

As their multitude betray,
And frustrate all attempts to tell:
So 'tis impossible to say
How much I love, I love so well.

The. But, hark you, Mervin? will you take after my father, and be a very husband now? Or don't you think I shall take after my mother, and be a commanding wife?

Mer. Oh, I'll trust you.

The. But you may pay for your confidence.

[*Exeunt* MER. *and* THE.

Giles. So, there goes a couple! Icod, I believe Old Nick has got among the people in these parts! This is as queer a thing as ever I heard of. Master Fairfield and Miss Patty, it seems, are gone to the castle, too; where, by what I larns from Ralph in the mill, my lord has promised to get her a husband among the servants. Now set in case the wind sets in that corner, I have been thinking with myself who the plague it can be: there are no unmarried men in the family, that I do know of, excepting little Bob, the postillion, and Master Jonathan, the butler; and he's a matter of sixty or seventy years old. I'll be shot if it be'nt little Bob! Icod, I'll take the way to the castle, as well as the rest; for I'd fain see how the nail do drive. It is well I had wit enough to discern things, and a friend to advise with, or else she would have fallen to my lot.—But I have got a surfeit of going a courting, and burn me if I won't live a bachelor! for, when all comes to all, I see nothing but ill blood and quarrels among folk when they are married.

AIR.

Then hey for a frolicsome life!
I'll ramble where pleasures are rife:
Strike up with the free-hearted lasses;
And never think more of a wife.
Plague on it! men are but asses,
To run after noise and strife.

Had we been together buckled,
'Twould have proved a fine affair;
Dogs would have barked at the cuckold,
And boys, pointing, cried—Look there!

[*Exit* GILES.

SCENE III.—*Changes to a grand apartment in* LORD AIMWORTH'S *house, opening to a view of the garden.*

Enter LORD AIMWORTH, FAIRFIELD, PATTY, *and* RALPH.

Lord Aim. Thus, Master Fairfield, I hope I have fully satisfied you with regard to the falsity of the imputation thrown upon your daughter and me?——

Fair. My lord, I am very well content; pray do not give yourself the trouble of saying any more.

Ralph. No, my lord, you need not say any more.

Fair. Hold your tongue, sirrah

Lord Aim. I am sorry, Patty, you have had this mortification.

Pat. I am sorry, my lord, you have been troubled about it; but really it was against my consent.

Fair. Well, come, children, we will not take up his honour's time any longer; let us be going towards home—Heaven prosper your lordship! the prayers of me and my family shall always attend you.

Lord Aim. Miller, come back—Patty, stay—

Fair. Has your lordship any thing further to command us?

Lord Aim. Why, yes, Master Fairfield, I have a word or two still to say to you—In short, though

you are satisfied in this affair, I am not; and you seem to forget the promise I made you, that, since I had been the means of losing your daughter one husband, I would find her another.

Fair. Your honour is to do as you please.

Lord Aim. What say you, Patty? will you accept of a husband of my chusing?

Pat. My lord, I have no determination; you are the best judge how I ought to act; whatever you command, I shall obey.

Lord Aim. Then, Patty, there is but one person I can offer you—and I wish, for your sake, he was more deserving—Take me.

Pat. Sir!

Lord Aim. From this moment our interests are one, as our hearts; and no earthly power shall ever divide us.

Fair. O the gracious! Patty—my lord—did I hear right! You, sir! you marry a child of mine!

Lord Aim. Yes, my honest old man! in me you behold the husband designed for your daughter; and I am happy, that, by standing in the place of fortune, who has alone been wanting to her, I shall be able to set her merit in a light, where its lustre will be rendered conspicuous.

Fair. But good, noble sir, pray consider! don't go to put upon a silly old man! my daughter is unworthy——Patty, child, why don't you speak?

Pat. What can I say, father? What answer to such unlooked-for, such unmerited, such unbounded generosity!

Ralph. Down on your knees, and fall a crying.

Pat. Yes, sir, as my father says, consider——your noble friends, your relations—It must not, cannot be.

Lord Aim. It must, and shall—Friends! Relations! from henceforth I have none, that will not acknowledge you: And I am sure, when they become acquainted with your perfections, those, whose suffrage I most esteem, will rather admire the justice of my choice, than wonder at its singularity.

AIR.

Lord Aim. My life, my joy, my blessing,
In thee, each grace possessing,
All must my choice approve.

Pat. To you my all is owing;
O! take a heart o'erflowing
With gratitude and love.

Lord Aim. Thus enfolding,
Thus beholding

Both. One to my soul so dear:
Can there be pleasure greater!
Can there be bliss completer!
'Tis too much to bear.

Enter SIR HARRY, LADY SYCAMORE, THEODOSIA, *and* MERVIN.

Sir Har. Well, we have followed your lordship's counsel, and made the best of a bad market—So, my lord, please to know our son-in-law, that is to be.

Lord Aim. You do me a great deal of honour. I wish you joy, sir, with all my heart! And now, sir Harry, give me leave to introduce to you a new relation of mine———This, sir, is shortly to be my wife.

Sir Har. My lord!

Lady Syc. Your lordship's wife!

Lord Aim. Yes, madam.

Lady Syc. And why so, my lord?

Lord Aim. Why, faith, madam, because I can't live happy without her—And I think she has too many amiable, too many estimable qualities, to meet with a worse fate.

Sir Har. Well, but you are a peer of the realm; you will have all the fleerers—

Lord Aim. I know very well the ridicule, that may be thrown on a lord's marrying a miller's daughter; and I own, with blushes, it has for some time had too great weight with me: but we should marry to please ourselves, not other people: and, on mature consideration, I can see no reproach justly merited, by raising a deserving woman to a station she is capable of adorning, let her birth be what it will.

Sir Har. Why, 'tis very true, my lord. I once knew a gentleman, that married his cook-maid: he was a relation of my own——You remember fat Margery, my lady? She was a very good sort of a woman, indeed she was, and made the best suet dumplings I ever tasted.

Lady Syc. Will you never learn, sir Harry, to guard your expressions? Well, but give me leave, my lord, to say a word to you—There are other ill consequences attending such an alliance.

Lord Aim. One of them I suppose is, that I, a peer, should be obliged to call this good old miller father-in-law? But where's the shame in that? He is as good as any lord, in being a man; and if we dare suppose a lord, that is not an honest man, he is, in my opinion, the more respectable character. Come, Master Fairfield, give me your hand; from henceforth you have done with working; we will pull down your mill, and build you a house in the place of it; and the money I intended for the portion of your daughter, shall now be laid out in purchasing a commission for your son.

Ralph. What, my lord, will you make me a captain!

Lord Aim. Ay, a colonel, if you deserve it.

Ralph. Then I'll keep Fan.

Enter GILES.

Giles. Ods bobs! where am I running? I beg pardon for my audacity.

Ralph. Hip, farmer; come back, mon, come back—Sure my lord's going to marry sister himself; feyther's to have a fine house, and I'm to be a captain.

Lord Aim. Ho, Master Giles! pray walk in; here is a lady, who, I dare swear, will be glad to see you, and give orders, that you shall always be made welcome.

Ralph. Yes, farmer, you'll always be welcome in the kitchen.

Lord Aim. What, have you nothing to say to your old acquaintance? Come, pray let the farmer salute you—Nay, a kiss—I insist upon it.

Sir Har. Ha, ha, ha!—Hem!

Lady Syc. Sir Harry, I am ready to sink at the monstrousness of your behaviour.

Lord Aim. Fy, Master Giles! don't look so sheepish; you and I were rivals, but not less friends at present. You have acted in this affair like an honest Englishman, who scorned even the shadow of dishonour, and thou shalt sit rent-free for a twelvemonth.

Sir Har. Come, shan't we all salute? With your leave, my lord, I'll———

Lady Syc. Sir Harry!

AIR.

Lord Aim. Yield who will to forms a martyr,
While, unawed by idle shame,
Pride for happiness I barter,
Heedless of the million's blame.
Thus with love my arms I quarter;
Women graced in nature's frame,
Every privilege, by charter,
Have a right from man to claim.

The. Eased of doubts, and fears presaging,
What new joys within me rise!
While mamma, her frowns assuaging,
Dares no longer tyrannise.
So long storms and tempests raging,
When the blustering fury dies,
Ah! how lovely, how engaging,
Prospects fair, and cloudless skies!

Sir Har. Dad! But this is wond'rous pretty,
Singing each a roun-de-lay,
And I'll mingle in the ditty,
Though I scarce know what to say.
There's a daughter, brisk and witty;
Here's a wife can wisely sway:
Trust me, masters, 'twere a pity
Not to let them have their way.

Pat. My example is a rare one;
But the cause may be divined:
Women want not merit—dare one
Hope discerning men to find.
O! may each accomplished fair one,
Bright in person, sage in mind,
Viewing my good fortune, share one
Full as splendid, and as kind!

Giles. Laughed at, slighted, circumvented,
And exposed for folks to see't,
'Tis as tho'f a man repented
For his follies in a sheet.
But my wrongs go unresented,
Since the fates have thought them meet:
This good company contented,
All my wishes are complete.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

COMMISSARY.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
Zachary Fungus, *the Commissary.*	Mrs Mechlin, *a commodious lady.*
Isaac Fungus, *his brother.*	Widow Loveit.
Gruell, *a lecturer on elocution.*	Dolly, *niece to* Mrs Mechlin.
Young Loveit, *son to* Widow Loveit.	Jenny, *servant to* Mrs Mechlin.
Bridoun, *a riding master.*	
Dr Catgut, *a musician.*	
Le Fleur, *valet to* Zachary Fungus.	
Simon, *pretended servant to* Dolly.	
Coachman.	

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Mrs Mechlin's *house.*

Loud knocking at the door.—Enter Jenny.

Jen. Rap, rap, rap! up stairs and down, from morning to night!—if this same commissary stays much longer amongst us, my mistress must e'en hire a porter. Who's there?

Sim. [*Without.*] Is Mrs Mechlin at home?

Jen. No. [*Opens the door.*] Oh! what, is it you, Simon?

Enter Simon.

Sim. At your service, sweet Mrs Jane.

Jen. Why, you knock with authority; and what are your commands, Master Simon?

Sim. I come, madam, to receive those of your mistress. What, Jenny, has she any great affair on the anvil? Her summous is most exceedingly pressing; and you need not be told, child, that a man of my consequence does not trouble himself about trifles.

Jen. Oh, sir, I know very well you principal actors don't perform every night.

Sim. Mighty well, ma'am! but, notwithstanding your ironical sneer, it is not every man that will do for your mistress; her agents must have genius and parts: I don't suppose, in the whole bills of mortality, there is so general and extensive a dealer as my friend Mrs Mechlin.

Jen. Why, to be sure, we have plenty of customers, and for various kinds of commodities; it would be pretty difficult, I fancy, to———

Sim. Commodities! Your humble servant, sweet Mrs Jane; yes, yes, you have various kinds of commodities, indeed.

Jen. Mr Simon, I don't understand you: I sup-

pose it is no secret in what sort of goods our dealing consists?

Sim. No, no; they are pretty well known.

Jen. And, to be sure, though now and then, to oblige a customer, my mistress does condescend to smuggle a little—

Sim. Keep it up, Mrs Jane!

Jen. Yet there are no people in the liberty of Westminster, that live in more credit than we do.

Sim. Bravo!

Jen. The very best of quality are not ashamed to visit my mistress.

Sim. They have reason.

Jen. Respected by the neighbours.

Sim. I know it.

Jen. Punctual in her payments.

Sim. To a moment.

Jen. Regular hours.

Sim. Doubtless.

Jen. Never miss the sarmant on Sundays.

Sim. I own it.

Jen. Not an oath comes out of her mouth, unless now and then, when the poor gentlewoman happens to be overtaken in liquor.

Sim. Granted.

Jen. Not at all given to lying, but, like other tradesfolks, in the way of her business.

Sim. Very well.

Jen. Very well! then pray, sir, what would you insinuate? Look you, Mr Simon, don't go to cast reflections upon us; don't think to blast the reputation of our—

Sim. Hark ye, Jenny, are you serious?

Jen. Serious! Ay, marry am I.

Sim. The devil you are!

Jen. Upon my word, Mr Simon, you should not give your tongue such a licence; let me tell you, these airs do not become you at all.

Sim. Hey-day! why, where the deuce have I got? Sure, I have mistaken the house; is not this Mrs Mechlin's?

Jen. That's pretty well known.

Sim. The commodious, convenient Mrs Mechlin, at the sign of the Star, in the parish of St Paul's?

Jen. Bravo!

Sim. That commercial caterpillar?

Jen. I know it.

Sim. That murderer of manufactures?

Jen. Doubtless.

Sim. That walking warehouse?

Jen. Granted.

Sim. That carries about a greater cargo of contraband goods under her petticoats than a Calais cutter?

Jen. Very well.

Sim. That engrosser and seducer of virgins?

Jen. Keep it up, Master Simon!

Sim. That forestaller of bagnios?

Jen. Incomparably fine!

Sim. That canting, cozening, money-lending, match-making, pawnbroking——

[*Loud knocking.*

Jen. Mighty well, sir! here comes my mistress; she shall thank you for the pretty picture you have been pleased to draw.

Sim. Nay, but, dear Jenny——

Jen. She shall be told how lightly she stands in your favour.

Sim. But, my sweet girl— [*Knock again.*

Jen. Let me go, Mr Simon; don't you hear?

Sim. And can you have the heart to ruin me at once?

Jen. Hands off!

Sim. A peace, a peace, my dear Mrs Jane, and dictate the articles.

Enter MRS MECHLIN, *followed by a hackney-coachman, with several bundles, in a capuchin, a bonnet, and her cloaths pinned up.*

Mrs Mech. So, hussy! what, must I stay all day in the streets? Who have we here? The devil's in the wenches, I think!—One of your fellows, I suppose——Oh, is it you? How fares it, Simon?

Jen. Madam, you should not have waited a minute; but Mr Simon——

Sim. Hush, hush! you barbarous jade——

Jen. Knowing your knock, and eager to open the door, flew up stairs, fell over the landing-place, and quite barred up the way.

Sim. Yes; and I am afraid I have put out my uncle. Thanks, Jenny; you shall be no loser, you slut. [*Aside.*

Mrs Mech. Poor Simon!——Oh, Lord have mercy upon me, what a round have I taken?—Is the wench petrified? Why don't you reach me a chair? don't you see I am tired to death?

Jen. Indeed, madam, you'll kill yourself.

Sim. Upon my word, madam Mechlin, you should take a little care of yourself; indeed you labour too hard.

Mrs Mech. Ay, Simon, and for little or nothing: only victuals and clothes: more cost than worship—Why does not the wench take the things from the fellow? Well, what's your fare?

Coach. Mistress, 'tis honestly worth half-a crown.

Mrs Mech. Give him a couple of shillings, and send him away.

Coach. I hope you'll tip me the tester to drink!

Mrs Mech. Them there fellows are never contented: Drink! Stand farther off! why, you smell already as strong as a beer-barrel.

Coach. Mistress, that's because I have already been drinking.

Mrs Mech. And are you not ashamed, you sot, to be eternally guzzling? You had better buy you some cloaths.

Coach. No, mistress; my honour won't let me do that.

Mrs Mech. Your honour! And pray how does that hinder you?

Coach. Why, when a good gentlewoman like you cries, Here, coachman, here's something to drink—

Mrs Mech. Well!

Coach. Would it be honour in me to lay it out in any thing else? No, mistress, my conscience won't let me; because why, 'tis the will of the donor, you know.

Mrs Mech. Did you ever hear such a blockhead!

Coach. No, no, mistress; though I am a poor man, I won't forfeit my honour; my cattle, thof I love them, poor beastesses, are not more dearer to me than that.

Mrs Mech. Yes, you and your horses give pretty strong proofs of your honour; for you have no cloaths on your back, and they have no flesh. Well, Jenny, give him the sixpence—— There, there; lay it out as you will.

Coach. It will be to your health, mistress; it shall melt at the Meuse before I go home; I shall be careful to clear my conscience.

Mrs Mech. I don't doubt it.

Coach. You need not; Mistress, your servant. [*Exit Coach.*

Mrs Mech. Has there been any body here, Jenny?

Jen. The gentleman, madam, about the Gloucestershire living.

Mrs Mech. He was! Oh, oh! what, I suppose his stomach's come down. Does he like the encumbrance? will he marry the party?

Jen. Why, that article seems to go a little against him.

Mrs Mech. Does it so? then, let him retire to his Cumberland curacy: that's a fine keen air; it will soon give him an appetite. He'll stick to his honour too, till his cassock is wore to a rag.

Jen. Why, indeed, madam, it seems pretty rusty already.

Mrs Mech. Devilish squeamish, I think; a good fat living, and a fine woman into the bargain! You told him a friend of the lady's will take the child off her hands?——

Jen. Yes, madam.

Mrs Mech. So that the affair will be a secret to all but himself. But he must quickly resolve; for, next week, his wife's month will be up.

Jen. He promised to call about four.

Mrs Mech. But don't let him think we are at a loss for a husband; there is, to my knowledge, a merchant's clerk in the city, a comely young man, and comes of good friends, that will take her with but a small place in the custom-house.

Jen. He shall know it.

Mrs Mech. Ay, and tell him that the party's party has interest enough to obtain it, whenever he will. And then the bridegroom may put the purchase-money too of that same presentation into his pocket.

Jen. Truly, madam, I should think this would prove the best match for the lady.

Mrs Mech. Who doubts it?——Here, Jenny, carry these things above stairs. Take care of the eigrette, leave the watch upon the table, and be sure you don't mislay the pearl-necklace: the lady goes to Mrs Corneleys's to-night; and, if she has any luck, she will be sure to redeem it to-morrow.

Sim. What a world of affairs! it is a wonder, madam, how you are able to remember them all.

Mrs Mech. Trifles, mere trifles, Master Simon—But I have a great affair in hand—such an affair, if well managed, it will be the making of us all.

Sim. If I, madam, can be of the least use——

Mrs Mech. Of the highest! there's no doing without you—You know the great—

Enter JENNY.

Jen. I have put the things where you ordered madam.

Mrs Mech. Very well, you may go. [*Exit* JENNY.] I say, you know the great commissary that is come to lodge in my house? Now, they say this Mr Fungus is as rich as an Indian governor; heaven knows how he came by it; but that, you know, is no business of ours. Pretty pickings, I warrant abroad. [*Loud knocking.*] Who the deuce can that be? But let it be who it will, you must not go till I speak to you.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. The widow Loveit, madam.

Mrs Mech. What, the old liquorish dowager from Devonshire Square? Show her in. [*Exit* JENNY.] You'll wait in the kitchen, Simon; I shall soon dispatch her affair. [*Exit* SIMON.

Enter MRS LOVEIT.

Mrs Love. So, so, good morning to you, good Mrs Mechlin! John, let the coach wait at the corner.

Mrs Mech. You had better sit here, madam.

Mrs Love. Any where. Well, my dear woman, I hope you have not forgot your old friend—Ugh, ugh, ugh.—[*Coughs.*] Consider I have no time to lose, and you are always so full of employment.

Mrs Mech. Forgot you! you shall judge, Mrs Loveit. I have, madam, provided a whole cargo

of husbands for you, of all nations, complexions, ages, tempers, and sizes: so, you see, you have nothing to do but choose.

Mrs Love. To choose, Mrs Mechlin! Lord help me! what choice can I have? I look upon wedlock to be a kind of a lottery, and I have already drawn my prize; and a great one it was! My poor dear man that's gone, I shall never meet with his fellow.

Mrs Mech. Psha, madam! don't let us trouble our heads about him; 'tis high time that he was forgot:

Mrs Lov. But won't his relations think me rather too quick?

Mrs Mech. Not a jot: the greatest compliment you could pay to his memory; it is a proof he gave you reason to be fond of the state. But what do you mean by quick? Why, he has been buried these three weeks——

Mrs Love. And three days, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Indeed! quite an age.

Mrs Love. Yes: but I shall never forget him; sleeping or waking, he's always before me. His dear swelled belly, and his poor shrunk legs; Lord bless me, Mrs Mechlin, he had no more calf than my fan!

Mrs Mech. No!

Mrs Love. No, indeed; and then, his bit of a purple nose, and his little weezen face as sharp as a razor——Don't mention it; I can never forget him. [*Cries.*

Mrs Mech. Sweet marks of remembrance indeed! But, madam, if you continue to be so fond of your last husband, what makes you think of another?

Mrs Love. Why, what can I do, Mrs Mechlin? a poor, lone, widow woman as I am; there's nobody minds me; my tenants behindhand, my servants all careless, my children undutiful—Ugh, ugh, ugh!— [*Coughs.*

Mrs Mech. You have a villanous cough, Mrs Loveit; shall I send for some lozenges?

Mrs Love. No, I thank you; 'tis nothing at all; mere habit; just a little trick I've got.

Mrs Mech. But I wonder you should have all these vexations to plague you, madam; you who are so rich, and so——

Mrs Love. Forty thousand in the four-per-cents every morning I rise, Mrs Mechlin, besides two houses at Hackney: but then, my affairs are so weighty and intricate; there is such trickling in lawyers, and such torments in children, that I can't do by myself; I must have a helpmate: quite necessity; no matter of choice.

Mrs Mech. Oh, I understand you! you marry merely for convenience? just only to get an assistant, a kind of a guard, a fence to your property?

Mrs Love. Nothing else.

Mrs Mech. I thought so; quite prudential; so that age is none of your object: you don't want a scampering, giddy, sprightly, young——

Mrs Love. Young!—Heaven forbid! What, do you think, like some ladies I know, that I want to have my husband taken for one of my grandchildren? No, no; thank Heaven, such vain thoughts never entered my head.

Mrs Mech. But yet, as your matters stand, he ought not to be so very old neither; for instance, now, of what use to you would be a husband of sixty?

Mrs Love. Sixty! Are you mad, Mrs Mechlin? what, do you think I want to turn nurse?

Mrs Mech. Or fifty-five?

Mrs Love. Ugh, ugh, ugh——

Mrs Mech. Or fifty?

Mrs Love. Oh! that's too cunning an age;—men, now-a-days, rarely marry at fifty; they are too knowing and cautious.

Mrs Mech. Or forty-five, or forty, or—

Mrs Love. Shall I, Mrs Mechlin, tell you a piece of my mind?

Mrs Mech. I believe, madam, that will be your best way.

Mrs Love. Why then, as my children are young and rebellious, the way to secure and preserve their obedience, will be to marry a man that won't grow old in a hurry.

Mrs Mech. Why, I thought you declared against youth?

Mrs Love. So I do, so I do; but then, six or seven and twenty is not so very young, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. No no, a pretty ripe age: for, at that time of life, men can bustle and stir; they are not easily checked; and whatever they take in hand, they go through with.

Mrs Love. True, true.

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, it is then they may be said to be useful; it is the only tear and wear season.

Mrs Love. Right, right.

Mrs Mech. Well, madam, I see what you want; and to-morrow, about this time, if you'll do me the favour to call——

Mrs Love. I shan't fail.

Mrs Mech. I think I can suit you.

Mrs Love. You'll be very obliging.

Mrs Mech. You may depend upon it, I'll do my endeavours.

Mrs Love. But, Mrs Mechlin, be sure don't let him be older than that, not above seven or eight and twenty at most; and let it be as soon as you conveniently can.

Mrs Mech. Never fear, madam.

Mrs Love. Because, you know, the more children I have by the second husband, the greater plague I shall prove to those I had by the first.

Mrs Mech. True, madam; you had better lean on me to the door. But, indeed, Mrs Loveit, you are very malicious to your children; very revengeful, indeed.

Mrs Love. Ah, they deserve it; you can't think what sad whelps they turn out; no punishment can be too much; if their poor father

could but have foreseen, they would have—why did I mention the dear man? it melts me too much. Well, peace be with him. To-morrow, about this time, Mrs Mechlin, will the party be here, think you?

Mrs Mech. I can't say.

Mrs Love. Well, a good day, good Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Here, John, take care of your mistress. [*Exit* MRS LOVEIT.] A good morning to you, madam. Jenny, bid Simon come up. A husband! there now is a proof of the prudence of age! I wonder they don't add a clause to the act to prevent the old from marrying clandestinely, as well as the young. I am sure there are as many unsuitable matches at this time of life as the other.

Enter SIMON.

Shut the door, Simon. Are there any of Mr Fungus's servants below?

Sim. Three or four strange faces.

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, some of that troop, I suppose. Come, Simon, be seated. Well, Simon, as I was telling you; this Mr Fungus, my lodger above, that has brought home from the wars a whole cart-load of money, and who (between you and I) went there from very little better than a driver of carts——

Sim. I formerly knew him, madam.

Mrs Mech. But he does not know you?

Sim. No, no!

Mrs Mech. I am glad of that—This spark, I say, not content with being really as rich as a lord, is determined to rival them, too, in every other accomplishment.

Sim. Will that be so easy? why he must be upwards of——

Mrs Mech. Fifty, I warrant.

Sim. Rather late in life to set up for a gentleman.

Mrs Mech. But fine talents, you know, and a strong inclination——

Sim. That, indeed————

Mrs Mech. Then, I promise you, he spares for no pains.

Sim. Diligent?

Mrs Mech. Oh, always at it. Learning something or other from morning to night; my house is a perfect academy, such a throng of fencers, dancers, riders, musicians——But, however, to sweeten the pill, I have a fellow-feeling for recommending the teachers.

Sim. No doubt, madam; that is always the rule.

Mrs Mech. But one of his studies is really diverting; I own I can't help laughing at that.

Sim. What may that be?

Mrs Mech. Oratory. You know his first ambition is to have a seat in a certain assembly; and in order to appear there with credit, Mr What-d'ye-Callum, the man from the city, attends every morning to give him a lecture upon speaking, and there is such haranguing and bellowing between them—Lord have mercy upon—but you'll see enough on't yourself; for, do you know, Simon, you are to be his valet-de-chambre?

Sim. Me, madam!

Mrs Mech. Ay, his privy counsellor, his confident, his director in chief.

Sim. To what end will that answer?

Mrs Mech. There I am coming—You are to know, that our squire Would-be is violently bent upon matrimony: and nothing, forsooth, will go down but a person of rank and condition.

Sim. Ay, ay, for that piece of pride he's indebted to Germany.

Mrs Mech. The article of fortune he holds in utter contempt; a grand alliance is all that he wants; so that the lady has but her veins full of high-blood, he does not care two-pence how low and how empty her purse is.

Sim. But, madam, won't it be difficult to meet with a suitable subject? I believe there are few ladies of quality that————

Mrs Mech. Oh, as to that, I am already provided.

Sim. Indeed!

Mrs Mech. You know my niece, Dolly?

Sim. Very well.

Mrs Mech. What think you of her?

Sim. Of Miss Dolly, for what?

Mrs Mech. For what! you are plaguily dull. Why, a woman of fashion, you dunce!

Sim. To be sure, Miss Dolly is very deserving, and few ladies have a better appearance; but, bless me, madam, here people of rank are so generally known, that the slightest inquiry would poison your project.

Mrs Mech. Oh, Simon, I have no fears from that quarter; there, I think, I am pretty secure.

Sim. If that, indeed, be the case——

Mrs Mech. In the first place, Mr Fungus has an entire reliance on me.

Sim. That's something.

Mrs Mech. Then, to baffle any idle curiosity, we are not derived from any of your new-fangled gentry, who owe their upstart nobility to your Harrys and Edwards. No, no; we are scions from an older stock; we are the hundred and fortieth lineal descendent from Hercules Alexander, earl of Glendower, prime minister to king Malcolm the First.

Sim. Odso! a qualification for a canon of Strasburg! So then, it seems, you are transplanted from the banks of the Tweed; cry you mercy! But how will Miss Dolly be able to manage the accent?

Mrs Mech. Very well; she was two years an actress in Edinburgh.

Sim. That's true; is the overture made? has there been any interview?

Mrs Mech. Several; we have no dislike to his person; can't but own he is rather agreeable; and as to his proposals, they are greater than we could desire—But we are prudent and careful, say nothing without the earl's approbation.

Sim. Oh, that will be easily had.

Mrs Mech. Not so easily; and now comes your part: but, first, how goes the world with you, Simon?

Sim. Never worse! the ten bags of tea, and the cargo of brandy, them peering rascals took from me in Sussex, has quite broken my back.

Mrs Mech. Poor Simon! why, then, I am afraid there's an end of your traffic?

Sim. Totally! for, now those fellows have got the Isle of Man in their hands, I have no chance to get home, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Then, you are entirely at leisure?

Sim. As a Bath turnspit in the month of July.

Mrs Mech. You are, then, Simon, an old family servant in waiting here on the lady; but, dispatched to the north, with a view to negociate the treaty, you are just returned with the noble peer's resolution. Prepare you a suitable equipage; I will provide you with a couple of letters, one for the lover, and one for the lady.

Sim. The contents?

Mrs Mech. Oh, you may read them within; now, with regard to any questions, I will furnish you with suitable answers; but you have a bungler to deal with, so your cards will be easily played.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Miss Dolly, madam, in a hackney-coach at corner; may she come in?

Mrs Mech. Are the servants out of the way?

Jen. Oh, she is so muffled up and disguised, that she'll run no danger from them.

Mrs Mech. Be sure, keep good watch at the door, Jenny.

Jen. Oh, never fear, madam!

[*Exit* JENNY.

Mrs Mech. Simon, take those two letters that are under the furthermost cushion in the window: run home, get a dirty pair of boots on, a great coat, and a whip, and be here with them in half an hour at farthest.

Sim. I will not fail. But have you no farther directions?

Mrs Mech. Time enough. I shall be in the way; for it is me that must introduce you above. [*Exit* SIMON.] So, things seem now in a pretty good train; a few hours, it is to be hoped, will make me easy for life. To say truth, I begin to be tired of my trade. To be sure, the profits are great; but then, so are the risks that I run: besides, my private practice begins to be smoked. Ladies are supposed to come here with different designs, than merely to look at my goods: some of my best customers, too, are got out of my channel, and manage their matters at home by their maids. Those asylums, they give a dreadful blow to my business. Time has been, when a gentleman wanted a friend, I could supply him with choice in an hour; but the market is spoiled, and a body might as soon produce a hare or a partridge as a pretty————

Enter DOLLY.

So, niece, are all things prepared? have you got the papers from Harpy?

Dol. Here they are, madam.

Mrs Mech. Let me see—Oh, the marriage-articles for Fungus to sign! Have you got the contract about you?

Dol. You know, aunt, I left it with you.

Mrs Mech. True, I had forgot: but where is the bond that I——Here it is; this Dolly, you must sign and seal before witnesses.

Dol. To what end, aunt?

Mrs Mech. Only, child, a trifling acknowledgment for all the trouble I have taken; a little hint to your husband, that he may reimburse your poor aunt, for your cloaths, board, lodging, and breeding.

Dol. I hope that my aunt does not suspect that I can ever be wanting————

Mrs Mech. No, my dear, not in the least—but it is best, Dolly, in order to prevent all retrospection, that we settle accounts before you change your condition.

Dol. But, madam, may not I see the contents?

Mrs Mech. The contents, love! of what use will that be to you? Sign and seal, that is enough.

Dol. But, aunt, I choose to see what I sign.

Mrs Mech. To see! what, then, you suspect me?

Dol. No, madam; but a little caution——

Mrs Mech. Caution! Here's an impudent baggage! how dare you dispute my commands! have not I made you, raised you from nothing, and won't a word from my mouth reduce you again?

Dol. Madam, I————

Mrs Mech. Answer me, hussy, was not you a beggar's brat at my door? did I not, out of compassion, take you into my house, call you my niece, and give you suitable breeding?

Dol. True, madam.

Mrs Mech. And what return did you make me? You was scarce got into your teens, you forward slut, but you brought me a child almost as big as yourself; and a delightful father you chose for it! Doctor Catgut, the meagre musician! that sick monkey-face maker of crotchets! that

eternal trotter after all the little draggle-tailed girls of the town. Oh, you low slut, had it been by a gentleman, it would not have vexed me; but a fiddler!

Dol. For Heaven's sake———

Mrs Mech. After that, you eloped, commenced stroller, and in a couple of years returned to town in your original trim, with scarce a rag to your back.

Dol. Pray, madam——

Mrs Mech. Did not I, notwithstanding, receive you again? have not I tortured my brains for your good! found you a husband as rich as a Jew, just brought all my matters to bear, and now you refuse to sign a paltry paper?

Dol. Pray, madam, give it me; I will sign, execute, do all that you bid me.

Mrs Mech. You will? yes, so you had best. And what is become of the child? have you done as I ordered?

Dol. The doctor was not at home; but the nurse left the child in the kitchen.

Mrs Mech. You heard nothing from him?

Dol. Not a word.

Mrs Mech. Then he is meditating some mischief, I warrant. However, let our good stars secure us to-day, and a fig for what may happen to-morrow. It is a little unlucky, though, that Mr Fungus has chosen the doctor for his master of music; but, as yet, he has not been here, and, if possible, we must prevent him.

Enter JENNY, *hastily.*

Jen. Mr Fungus, the tallow-chandler, madam, is crossing the way; shall I say you are at home?

Mrs Mech. His brother hath servants enough, let some of them answer. Hide, Dolly. [*Exeunt* DOLLY *and* JENNY—*one knock at the door.*]—Ay, that's the true tap of the trader: this old brother of ours, though, is smoky and shrewd, and, though an odd, a sensible fellow; we must guard against him: if he gets but an inkling, but the slightest suspicion, our project is marred.—[*A noise without.*] What the deuce is the matter? As I live, a squabble between him and La Fleur, the French footman we hired this morning! This may make mirth; I'll listen a little. [*Retires.*

Enter MR ISAAC FUNGUS, *driving in* LA FLEUR.

I. Fun. What, is there nobody in the house that can give me an answer? where's my brother, you rascal?

La Fleur. *Je n'entend pas.*

I. Fun. Paw! what the devil is that? Answer yes or no! is my brother at home? don't shrug up your shoulders at me, you—Oh, here comes a rational being!

Enter MRS MECHLIN.

Madam Mechlin, how fares it? this here lanthorn-jawed rascal won't give me an answer, and indeed, would scarce let me into the house.

La Fleur. *C'est gros burgeois a fait une tapage de diable.*

Mrs Mech. *Fy donc! c'est le frere de Monsieur.*

La Fleur. *Le frere! mon Dieu!*

I. Fun. What is all this? what the devil lingo is the fellow a-talking?

Mrs Mech. This is a footman from France that your brother has taken.

I. Fun. From France! and is that the best of his breeding? I thought we had taught them better manners abroad, than to come here and insult us at home. People make such a rout about smuggling their Frenchified goods; their men do us more mischief. If we could but hinder the importing of them——

Mrs Mech. Ay, you are a true Briton; I see that, Mr Isaac.

I. Fun. I warrant me: Is brother Zachary at home?

Mrs Mech. Above stairs, sir.

I. Fun. Any company with him?

Mrs Mech. Not any to hinder your visit. La Fleur, *ouvrez la porte.*

I. Fun. Get along, you—Mrs Mechlin, your servant. [*Exit* MRS MECHLIN.] I can't think what the devil makes your quality so fond of the monsieurs; for my part, I don't see——March and be hanged to you——you sooty-faced——

[*Exeunt* I. FUNGUS *and* LA FLEUR.

Mrs Mech. Come, Dolly, you may now appear.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Mr Paduasoy, ma'am, the Spitalfields weaver; he has been waiting this hour, and says he has some people at home——

Mrs Mech. Let him enter; in a couple of minutes I'll follow you, Dolly.

[*Exit* JENNY.

Enter PADUASOY.

Mrs Mech. Mr Paduasoy, you may load yourself home with those silks; they won't do for my market.

Pad. Why, what's the matter, madam?

Mrs Mech. Matter! you are a pretty fellow indeed! you are a tradesman! 'tis lucky I know you; things might have been worse; let us settle accounts, Mr Paduasoy; you'll see no more of my money.

Pad. I shall be sorry for that, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Sorry! answer me one question: Am not I the best customer that you ever had?

Pad. I confess it.

Mrs Mech. Have I not mortgaged my precious

soul, by swearing to my quality-customers that the stuff from your looms was the produce of Lyons?

Pad. Granted.

Mrs Mech. And, unless that had been believed, could you have sold them a yard, nay a nail?

Pad. I believe not.

Mrs Mech. Very well. Did not, sir, I procure you more money for your cursed goods, when sold as the manufacture of France, than, as mere English, they could have ever produced you?

Pad. I never denied it.

Mrs Mech. Then, are not you a pretty fellow, to blow up and ruin my reputation at once?

Pad. Me, madam!

Mrs Mech. Yes, you.

Pad. As how?

Mrs Mech. Did not you tell me these pieces of silk were entire, and the only ones you had made of that pattern?

Pad. I did.

Mrs Mech. Now mind. Last Monday I left them as just landed, upon a pretence to secure them from seizure, at the old countess of Furbelow's, by whose means I was sure, at my own price, to get rid of them both; and who should come in last night at the ball at the Mansion-house, where my lady unluckily happened to be, with a fullsuit of the blue pattern upon her back, but Mrs Deputy Dowlass, dizened out like a duchess?

Pad. Mrs Deputy Dowlass! Is it possible?

Mrs Mech. There is no denying the fact; but that was not all. If, indeed, Mrs Deputy had behaved like a gentlewoman, and swore they had been sent her from Paris, why, there the thing would have died: but see what it is to have to do with mechanics; the fool owned she had them from you! I should be glad to see any of my customers at a loss for a lie; but those trumpery traders, Mr Paduasoy, you'll never gain any credit by them.

Pad. This must be a trick of my wife's; I know the women are intimate; but this piece of intelligence will make a hot house. None of my fault, indeed, Mrs Mechlin; I hope, ma'am, this won't make any difference?

Mrs Mech. Difference! I don't believe I shall be able to smuggle a gown for you these six months. What is in that bundle?

Pad. Some India handkerchiefs, that you promised to procure of a supercargo at Woolwich for sir Thomas Calico's lady.

Mrs Mech. Are you pretty forward with the light sprigged waistcoats from Italy?

Pad. They will be out of the loom in a week.

Mrs Mech. You need not put any Genoa velvets in hand till the end of autumn; but you may make me immediately a fresh sortment of foreign ribbons for summer.

Pad. Any other commands, Mrs Mechlin?

Mrs Mech. Not at present, I think.

Pad. I wish you, madam, a very good morning.

Mrs Mech. Mr Paduasoy! Lord, I had like to have forgot. You must write an anonymous letter to the custom-house, and send me some old silks to be seized; I must treat the town with a bonfire: it will make a fine paragraph for the papers, and at the same time advertise the public where such things may be had.

Pad. I shan't fail, madam.

[*Exit* PADUASOY.

Mrs Mech. Who says now, that I am not a friend to my country? I think the Society for the Encouragement of Arts should vote me a premium. I am sure I am one of the greatest encouragers of our own manufactures.

[*Exit* MRS MECHLIN.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter ZACHARY FUNGUS, ISAAC FUNGUS, *and* MRS MECHLIN.

Z. Fun. BROTHER Isaac, you are a blockhead, I tell you. But first answer me this: Can knowledge do a man any harm?

I. Fun. No, surely; what is befitting a man for to learn.

Z. Fun. To learn! and how should you know what is befitting a gentleman to learn? stick to your trade, Master Tallow-chandler.

I. Fun. Now, brother Zachary, can you say in your conscience, as how it is decent to be learning to dance, when you ha' almost lost the use of your legs?

Z. Fun. Lost the use of my legs! to see but the malice of men! Do but ax Mrs Mechlin; now, ma'am, does not Mrs Dukes say, that, considering my time, I have made a wonderful progress?

I. Fun. Your time, brother Zac?

Z. Fun. Ay, my time, brother Isaac. Why, I ha'nt been at it passing a couple of months; and we have at our school two aldermen and a serjeant at law, that were full half a year before they could get out of hand.

Mrs Mech. Very true, sir.

Z. Fun. There, now! Mrs Mechlin can vouch it. And pray, ma'am, does not master allow, that, of my age, I am the most hopeful scholar he has?

Mrs Mech. I can't but say, Mr Isaac, that the 'squire has made a most prodigious improvement!

Z. Fun. Do you hear that? I wish we had

but a kit, I would show you what I could do: One, two, three, ha! One, two, three, ha! There are risings and sinkings!

Mrs Mech. Ay, marry, as light as a cork.

Z. Fun. An't it? Why, before next winter is over, he says he'll fit me for dancing in public; and who knows but in Lent you may see me amble at a ridotto with an opera-singer?

Mrs Mech. And I warrant he acquits himself as well as the best.

I. Fun. Mercy on me! and, pray, brother, that thing like a sword in your hand, what may the use of that implement be?

Z. Fun. This? oh, this is a foil.

I. Fun. A foil?

Z. Fun. Ay, a little instrument, by which we, who are gentlemen, are instructed to kill one another.

I. Fun. To kill! Marry, heaven forbid! I hope you have no such bloody intentions. Why, brother Zac, you was used to be a peaceable man.

Z. Fun. Ay, that was when I was a paltry mechanic, and afraid of the law; but now I am another-guess person; I have been in camps, cantoons, and intrenchments; I have marched over bridges and breaches; I have seen the Ezell and Wezell; I'm got as rich as a Jew; and if any man dares to affront me, I'll let him know that my trade has been fighting.

I. Fun. Rich as a Jew! Ah, Zac, Zac! but if you had not had another-guess trade than fighting, I doubt whether you would have returned altogether so rich: but now you have got all this wealth, why not sit down and enjoy it in quiet?

Z. Fun. Hark ye, Isaac? do you purtend to know life? are you acquainted with the beaux d'espirits of the age?

I. Fun. I don't understand you.

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; then how should you know what belongs to gentility?

I. Fun. And why not as well as you, brother Zac? I hope I am every whit as well born?

Z. Fun. Ay, Isaac, but the breeding is all: consider I have been a gentleman above five years and three quarters, and I think should know a little what belongs to the business; hey, Mrs Mechlin?

Mrs Mech. Very true, sir.

Z. Fun. And as to this foil, do you know, Isaac, in what the art of fencing consists?

I. Fun. How should I?

Z. Fun. Why, it is short; there are but two rules: the first is to give your antagonist as many thrusts as you can; the second, to be careful and receive none yourself.

I. Fun. But how is this to be done?

Z. Fun. Oh, easy enough: for, do you see, if you can but divert your adversary's point from the line of your body, it is impossible he ever should hit you; and all this is done by a little turn of the wrist, either this way or that way. But I'll show you: John, bring me a foil. Mrs Mechlin, it will be worth your observing. Here, brother Isaac—— [*Offers him a foil.*

I. Fun. Not I.

Z. Fun. These bourgeois are so frightful! Mrs Mechlin, will you, ma'am, do me the favour to push at me a little? Mind, brother, when she thrusts at me in carte, I do so; and when she pushes in tierce, I do so; and by this means a man is sure to avoid being killed. But it may not be amiss, brother Isaac, to give you the progress of a regular quarrel; and then you will see what sort of a thing a gentleman is. Now I have been told, d'ye see, brother Isaac, by a friend who has a regard for my honour, that captain Jenkins, or Hopkins, or Wilkins, or what captain you please, has in public company called me a cuckold———

I. Fun. A cuckold! But how can that be? because why, brother Zac, you ben't married.

Z. Fun. But as I am just going to be married, that may very well happen, you know.

Mrs Mech. True.

Z. Fun. Yes, yes, the thing is natural enough. Well, the captain has said I am a cuckold. Upon which, the first time I set eyes on captain Wilkins, either at Vauxhall or at Ranelagh, I accost him in a courteous, genteel-like manner.

I. Fun. And that's more than he merits.

Z. Fun. Your patience, dear Isaac—in a courteous, gentleman-like manner; captain Hopkins, your servant.

I. Fun. Why, you called him but now, captain Wilkins!

Z. Fun. Psha! You blockhead, I tell you the name does not signify nothing——Your servant; shall I crave your ear for a moment? The captain politely replies, Your commands, good Mr Fungus? Then we walk side by side—Come here, Mrs Mechlin—[*They walk up and down.*]—for some time as civil as can be. Mind, brother Isaac.

I. Fun. I do, I do.

Z. Fun. Hey! no, t'other side, Mrs Mechlin—that's right—I hear, captain Wilkins——

I. Fun. I knew it was Wilkins.

Z. Fun. Zounds! Isaac, be quiet—Wilkins, that you have taken some liberties about, and concerning of me, which, damme, I don't understand——

I. Fun. Don't swear, brother Zachary.

Z. Fun. Did ever mortal hear the like of this fellow!

I. Fun. But you are grown such a reprobate since you went to the wars.

Z. Fun. Mrs Mechlin, stop the tongue of that blockhead! why, dunce, I am speaking by rule, and Mrs Mechlin can tell you that duels and damme's go always together.

Mrs Mech. O, always!

Z. Fun. Which, damme, I don't understand.—Liberties with you, cries the captain! where,

when, and in what manner? Last Friday night, in company at the St Alban's, you called me a buck; and moreover said, that my horns were exalted. Now, sir, I know very well what was your meaning by that, and therefore demand satisfaction. That, sir, is what I never deny to a gentleman; but as to you, Mr Fungus, I can't consent to give you that rank. How, sir! Do you deny my gentility? Oh, that affront must be answered this instant—Draw, sir! Now push, Mrs Mechlin!—[*They fence.*]—There I parry tierce; there I parry carte; there I parry—— Hold, hold; have a care; zooks! Mrs Mechlin!

I. Fun. Ha, ha, ha! I think you have met with your match; well pushed, Mrs Mechlin.

Z. Fun. Ay, but instead of pushing in tierce, she pushed me in carte, and came so thick with her thrusts, that it was not in nature to parry them.

I. Fun. Well, well, I am fully convinced of your skill. But I think, brother Zac, you hinted an intention of marrying; is that your design?

Z. Fun. Undoubtedly.

I. Fun. And when?

Z. Fun. Why, this evening.

I. Fun. So sudden! and pray, is it a secret? to whom?

Z. Fun. A secret! no; I am proud of the match; she brings me all that I want; her veins full of good blood; such a family! such an alliance! zooks, she has a pedigree as long as the Mall, brother Isaac, with large trees on each side, and all the boughs loaded with lords!

I. Fun. But has the lady no name?

Z. Fun. Name! ay, such a name! Lord, we have nothing like it in London! none of your stunted little dwarfish words of one syllable; your Watts, and your Potts, and your Trotts; this rumbles through the throat like a cart with broad wheels. Mrs Mechlin, you can pronounce it better than me.

Mrs Mech. Lady Sacharissa Mackirkincroft.

Z. Fun. Kirkincroft! there are a mouthful of syllables for you! Lineally descended from Hercules Alexander Charlemagne Hannibal, earl of Glendower, prime minister to king Malcolm I.

I. Fun. And are all the parties agreed?

Z. Fun. I can't say quite all; for the right honourable peer, that is to be my papa, (who, by the by, is as proud as the devil) has flatly renounced the alliance; calls me here in his letter Plebeian; and says, if we have any children, they will turn out very little better than pye-balds.

I. Fun. And what does the gentlewoman say?

Z. Fun. The gentlewoman! Oh, the gentlewoman, who (between ourselves) is pretty near as high as her father—but, however, my person has proved too hard for her pride, and I take the affair to be as good as concluded.

I. Fun. It is resolved?

Z. Fun. Fixed.

I. Fun. I am sorry for it.

Z. Fun. Why so? Come, come, brother Isaac don't be uneasy; I have a shrewd guess at your grievance; but though you may not be suffered to see lady Scracarissa at first, yet who knows before long, I may have interest enough with her to bring it about? and, in the mean time, you may dine when you will with the steward.

I. Fun. You are exceedingly kind.

Z. Fun. Mrs Mechlin, you don't think my lady will gainsay it?

Mrs Mech. By no means; it is wonderful, considering her rank, how mild and condescending she is: why, but yesterday, says her ladyship to me, though, Mrs Mechlin, it can't be supposed that I should admit any of the Fungus into my presence——

Z. Fun. No, no, to be sure; not at first, as I said.

Mrs Mech. Yet his brother, or any other relation, may dine with the servants every day.

Z. Fun. Do you hear, Isaac? there's your true, inherent nobility, so humble and affable! but people of real rank never have any pride; that is only for upstarts.

I. Fun. Wonderfully gracious! but here, brother Zac, you mistake me: it is not for myself I am sorry.

Z. Fun. Whom then?

I. Fun. For you. Don't you think that your wife will despise you?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you suppose that you will live together a month?

Z. Fun. Yes.

I. Fun. Why, can you bear to walk about your own house like a paltry dependant?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To have yourself and your orders contemned by your servants?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To see your property devoured by your lady's beggarly cousins, who, notwithstanding, won't vouchsafe you a nod?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you be blind at her bidding, run at her sending, come at her calling, dine by yourself when she has bettermost company, and sleep six nights a-week in the garret?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Why, will you dare to disobey, have the impudence to dispute the sovereign will and pleasure of a lady like her?

Z. Fun. Ay, marry will I.

I. Fun. And don't you expect a whole clan of Andrew Ferraras, with their naked points at your throat?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Then you don't know half you will have to go through.

Z. Fun. Look you, brother, I know what you would be at; you don't mean I should marry at all.

I. Fun. Indeed, brother Zachary, you wrong me; I should, with pleasure, see you equally matched, that is, to one of your own rank and condition.

Z. Fun. You would? I don't doubt it; but that is a pleasure you never will have. Look you, Isaac, I have made up my mind; it is a lady I like, and a lady I will have; and, if you say any more, I'll not be contented with that, for, damme, I will marry a duchess!

Enter LA FLEUR.

La Fleur. *Le maitre pour donner d'eloquence.*

Z. Fun. What does the puppy say, Mrs Mechlin? for, you know, I can't parle vous.

Mrs Mech. The gentleman from the city, that is to make you a speaker.

Z. Fun. Odzooks! a special fine fellow! let's have him.

Mrs Mech. *Faites les entres.*

[*Exit* LA FLEUR.

I. Fun. Brother, as you are busy, I will take another——

Z. Fun. No, no, this is the finest fellow of all; it is he that is to make me a man; and hark'e, brother? if I should chance to rise in the state, no more words—your business is done.

I. Fun. What! I reckon some member of parliament?

Z. Fun. A member! Lord help you, brother Isaac! this man is a whole senate himself. Why, it is the famous orationer that has published the book.

I. Fun. What! Mr Gruel?

Z. Fun. The same.

I. Fun. Yes, I have seen his name in the news.

Z. Fun. His knowledge is wonderful; he has told me such secrets! why, do you know, Isaac, by what means 'tis we speak?

I. Fun. Speak! Why, we speak with our mouths.

Z. Fun. No, we don't.

I. Fun. No!

Z. Fun. No. He says we speak by means of the tongue, the teeth, and the throat; and, without them, we should only bellow.

I. Fun. But surely the mouth——

Z. Fun. The mouth, I tell you, is little or nothing; only just a cavity for the air to pass through.

I. Fun. Indeed!

Z. Fun. That's all; and when the cavity is small, little sounds will come out; when large, the great ones proceed: observe, now, in whistling and bawling—[*Whistles and bawls.*]—Do you see? Oh, he is a miraculous man!

I. Fun. But of what use is all this?

Z. Fun. But 'tis knowledge, an't it? And of what signification is that, you fool? And then as to use, why, he can make me speak in any manner he pleases; as a lawyer, a merchant, a country gentleman; whatever the subject requires—But here he is.

Enter MR GRUEL.

Mr Gruel, your servant; I have been holding forth in your praise.

Gruel. I make no doubt, Mr Fungus; but to your declamation, or recitation (as Quintilian more properly terms it), I shall be indebted for much future praise, inasmuch as the reputation of the scholar does (as I may say) confer, or rather, as it were, reflect a marvellous kind of lustre on the fame of the master himself.

Z. Fun. There, Isaac, didst ever hear the like? He talks just as if it were all out of a book: What would you give to be able to utter such words?

I. Fun. And what should I do with them? Them holiday terms would not pass in my shop; there's no buying and selling with them.

Gruel. Your observation is pithy and pertinent. Different stations different idioms demand; polished periods accord ill with the mouths of mechanics; but as that tribe is permitted to circulate a baser kind of coin, for the ease and convenience of inferior traffic, so it is indulged with a vernacular or vitious vulgar phraseology, to carry on their interlocutory commerce. But I doubt, sir, I soar above the region of your comprehension?

I. Fun. Why, if you would come down a step or two, I can't say but I should understand you the better.

Z. Fun. And I, too.

Gruel. Then to the familiar I fall: if the gentleman has any ambition to shine at a vestry, a common-hall, or even a convivial club, I can supply him with ample materials.

I. Fun. No, I have no such desire.

Gruel. Not to lose time—your brother here (for such I find the gentleman is), in other respects a common man like yourself——

Z. Fun. No better.

Gruel. Observe how altered by means of my art! are you prepared in the speech on the great importance of trade?

Z. Fun. Pretty well, I believe.

Gruel. Let your gesticulations be chaste, and your muscular movements consistent.

Z. Fun. Never fear——

Enter JENNY, *and whispers* MRS MECHLIN.

Mrs Mechlin, you'll stay?

Mrs Mech. A little business; I'll return in an instant.

[*Exit* MRS MECH.

Gruel. A little here to the left, if you please, sir; there you will only catch his profile—that's right—now you will have the full force of his face; one, two, three; now, off you go!

Z. Fun. When I consider the vast importance of this day's debate; when I revolve the various vicissitudes that this soil has sustained; when I ponder what our painted progenitors were, and what we, their civilized successors, are: when I reflect, that they fed on crab-apples and chesnuts———

Gruel. Pignuts, good sir, if you please.

Z. Fun. You are right—crab-apples and pignuts; and that we feast on greenpease and on custards: when I trace, in the recording historical page, that their floods gave them nothing but frogs, and now know we have fish by land-carriage, I am lost in amazement at the prodigious power of commerce. Hail, commerce! daughter of industry, consort to credit, parent of opulence, full sister to liberty, and great-grandmother to the art of navigation—

I. Fun. Why, this gentlewoman has a pedigree as long as your wife's, brother Zac!

Z. Fun. Prithee, Isaac, be quiet; art of navigation—a—a—vigitation—Zooks, that fellow has put me quite out!

Gruel. It matters not; this day's performance has largely fulfilled your yesterday's promise.

Z. Fun. But I han't half done, the best is to come; let me just give him that part about turnpegs——for the sloughs, the mires, the ruts, the impassable bogs, that the languid, but generous steed travelled through; he now pricks up his ears, he neighs, he canters, he capers through a whole region of turn-pegs.

Enter MRS MECHLIN.

Mrs Mech. Your riding-master is below,

Z. Fun. Gadso! then here we must end.—You'll pardon me, good Mr Gruel; for as I want to be a finished gentleman as soon as I can, it is impossible for me to stick long to any one thing.

Gruel. Sir, though your exit is rather abrupt, yet the multiplicity of your avocations do (as I may say) in some measure cicatrize the otherwise mortal wound on this occasion sustained by decorum.

Z. Fun. Cicatrize! I could hear him all day. He is a wonderful man! Well, Mr Gruel, tomorrow we will at it again.

Gruel. You will find me prompt at your slightest volition.

Z. Fun. I wish, brother Isaac, I could have staid; you should have heard me oration away, like a lawyer, about pleadings and presidents; but all in good time.

[*Exit* Z. FUN.

Mrs Mech. This gentleman, sir, will gain you vast credit.

Gruel. Yes, madam, the capabilities of the gentleman, I confess, are enormous; and as to you I am indebted for this promising pupil, you will permit me to expunge the obligation by an instantaneous and gratis lecture on that species of eloquence peculiar to ladies.

Mrs Mech. Oh, sir, I have no sort of occasion—

Gruel. As to that biped, man (for such I design him to be), a male or masculine manner belongs—

Mrs Mech. Any other time, good Mr Gruel.

Gruel. So, to that biped, woman, she participating of his general nature, the word *homo*, in Latin, being promiscuously used as woman or man——

Mrs Mech. For Heaven's sake—

Gruel. But being cast in a more tender and delicate mould—

Mrs Mech. Sir, I have twenty people in waiting—

Gruel. The soft, suppliant, insinuating graces—

Mrs Mech. I must insist—

Gruel. Do appertain (as I may say) in a more peculiar or more particular manner—

Mrs Mech. Nay, then—

Gruel. Her rank in the order of entities—

Mrs Mech. I must thrust you out of my house.

Gruel. Not calling her forth—

Mrs Mech. Was there ever such a—

[*Pushing him out.*

Re-enter GRUEL.

Gruel. To those eminent, hazardous, and (as I may say) perilous conflicts, which so often—

Mrs Mech. Get down stairs, and be hanged to you!—[*Pushes him out.*]—There he goes, as I live, from the top to the bottom! I hope I han't done him a mischief: You arn't hurt, Mr Gruel? No, all's safe; I hear him going on with his speech; an impertinent puppy!

I. Fun. Impertinent indeed; I wonder all those people don't turn your head, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Oh, I am pretty well used to them. But who comes here? Mr Isaac, if you will step into the next room, I have something to communicate that well deserves your attention.

[*Exit* I. FUN.

Enter SIMON.

Sim. Dr Catgut at the foot of the stairs.

Mrs Mech. The devil he is! What can have brought him at this time of day? Watch, Simon, that nobody comes up whilst he is here.—[*Exit* SIM.]—I hope he has not heard of the pretty present we sent him to-day?

Enter DR CATGUT.

Dr Cat. Madam Mechlin, your humble. I have, madam, received a couple of compliments from your mansion this morning; one I find

from a lodger of yours; the other, I presume, from your niece; but for the last, I rather suppose I am indebted to you.

Mrs Mech. Me! Indeed, doctor, you are widely mistaken: I assure you, sir, since your business broke out, I have never set eyes of her once.

Dr Cat. Then I am falsely informed.

Mrs Mech. But, after all, you must own it is but what you deserve: I wonder, doctor, you don't leave off these tricks.

Dr Cat. Why, what can I do, Mrs Mechlin? My constitution requires it.

Mrs Mech. Indeed! I should not have thought it.

Dr Cat. Then the dear little devils are so desperately fond.

Mrs Mech. Without doubt.

Dr Cat. And for frolic, flirtation, diligence, dress, and address——

Mrs Mech. To be sure.

Dr Cat. For what you call genuine gallantry, few men, I flatter myself, will be found that can match me.

Mrs Mech. Oh, that's a point given up.

Dr Cat. Hark'e, Molly Mechlin; let me perish, child, you look divinely to-day.

Mrs Mech. Indeed!

Dr Cat. But that I have two or three affairs on my hands, I should be positively tempted to trifle with thee a little.

Mrs Mech. Ay, but, doctor, consider I am not of a trifling age; it would be only losing your time.

Dr Cat. Ha, so coy! But a-propos, Molly, this lodger of yours; who is he, and what does he want?

Mrs Mech. You have heard of the great Mr Fungus?

Dr Cat. Well!

Mrs Mech. Being informed of your skill and abilities, he has sent for you to teach him to sing.

Dr Cat. Me teach him to sing! What, does the scoundrel mean to affront me?

Mrs Mech. Affront you!

Dr Cat. Why, don't you know, child, that I have quitted that paltry profession?

Mrs Mech. Not I.

Dr Cat. Oh, entirely renounced it.

Mrs Mech. Then what may you follow at present?

Dr Cat. Me! Nothing; I am a poet, my dear.

Mrs Mech. A poet!

Dr Cat. A poet. The muses; you know I was always fond of the ladies: I suppose you have heard of Shakespeare, and Shadwell, of Tom Brown, and of Milton and Hudibras?

Mrs Mech. I have.

Dr Cat. I shall blast all their laurels, by Gad! I have just given the public a taste, but there's a belly-full for them in my larder at home.

Mrs Mech. Upon my word, you surprise me; but pray, is poetry a trade to be learned?

Dr Cat. Doubtless. Capital as I am, I have not acquired it above a couple of years.

Mrs Mech. And could you communicate your art to another?

Dr Cat. To be sure. Why I have here in my pocket, my dear, a whole folio of rhimes, from Z quite to great A. Let us see; A, ay, here it begins, A, ass, pass, grass, mass, lass; and so quite through the alphabet down to Z. Zounds, grounds, mounds, pounds, hounds.

Mrs Mech. And what do you do with those rhimes?

Dr Cat. Oh, we supply them!

Mrs Mech. Supply them?

Dr Cat. Ay! fill them up, as I will show you. Last week, in a ramble to Dulwich, I made these rhimes into a duet for a new comic opera I have on the stocks. Mind, for I look upon the words as a model for that sort of writing.——First, she:

There to see the sluggish ass,
Thro' the meadows as we pass,
Eating up the farmer's grass,
Blyth and merry, by the mass,
As a lively country lass.

Mrs Mech. Very pretty!

Dr Cat. A'n't it? Then he replies:

Hear the farmer cry out, Zounds!
As he trudges through the grounds,
Yonder beast hath broke my mounds;
If the parish has no pounds,
Kill, and give him to the hounds.

Then da capo, both join in repeating the last stanza; and this, tacked to a tolerable tune, will run you for a couple of months. You observe?

Mrs Mech. Clearly. As our gentleman is desirous to learn all kinds of things, I can't help thinking but he will take a fancy to this.

Dr Cat. In that case, he may command me, my dear; and I promise you, in a couple of months, he shall know as much of the matter as I do.

Mrs Mech. At present he is a little engaged; but as soon as the honey-moon is over——

Dr Cat. Honey-moon! Why, is he going to be married?

Mrs Mech. This evening, I fancy.

Dr Cat. The finest opportunity in nature for an introduction: I have by me, ma'am Mechlin, of my own composition, such an epithalmium!—

Mrs Mech. Thalmium, what's that?

Dr Cat. A kind of an elegy, that we poets compose at the solemnization of weddings.

Mrs Mech. Oh, ho!

Dr Cat. It is set to music already, for I still compose for myself.

Mrs Mech. You do?

Dr Cat. What think you, now, of providing a band, and serenading the 'squire to-night? It will be a pretty extempore compliment.

Mrs Mech. The prettiest thought in the world. But I hear Mr Fungus's bell. You'll excuse me, dear doctor; you may suppose we are busy.

Dr Cat. No apology then; I'll about it this instant.

Mrs Mech. As soon as you please. Any thing to get you out of the way.

[*Aside, and exit.*

Dr Cat. Your obsequious, good madam Mechlin. But notwithstanding all your fine speeches, I shrewdly suspect my blessed bargain at home was a present from you; and what shall I do with it?——These little embarrasses we men of intrigue are eternally subject to.—There will be no sending it back; she will never let it enter the house.—Hey, gad! a lucky thought is come into my head——this serenade is finely contrived——Madam Mechlin shall have her cousin again, for I will return her bye-blow in the body of a double base viol; so the bawd shall have a concert as well as the 'squire.——

[*Exit* DR CATGUT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter HARPY, YOUNG LOVEIT, *and* JENNY.

Har. TELL your mistress my name is Harpy; she knows me, and how precious my time is.

Jen. Mr Harpy, the attorney of Furnival's Inn?

Har. The same. [*Exit* JENNY.] Ay, ay, young gentleman, this is your woman; I warrant your business is done. You knew Kitty Williams, that married Mr Abednego Potiphar, the Jew-broker?

Young Love. I did.

Har. And Robin Rainbow, the happy husband of the widow Champansy, from the isle of St Kitts?

Young Love. I have seen him.

Har. All owing to her. Her success in that branch of business is wonderful! Why, I dare believe, since last summer, she has not sent off less than forty couple to Edinburgh.

Young Love. Indeed! She must be very adroit.

Har. Adroit! You shall judge. I will tell you a case: You know the large brick-house at Peckham, with a turret at top?

Young Love. Well.

Har. There lived Miss Cicely Mite, the only daughter of old Mite the cheesemonger, at the corner of Newgate-street, just turned of fourteen, and under the wing of an old maiden aunt, as watchful as a dragon——but hush——I hear Mrs Mechlin; I'll take another season to finish my tale.

Young Love. But, Mr Harpy, as these kind of women are a good deal given to gossipping, I would rather my real name was a secret, till there is a sort of necessity.

Har. Gossipping! She, Lord help you! she is as close as a Catholic confessor.

Young Love. That may be; but you must give me leave to insist.

Har. Well, well; as you please.

Enter MRS MECHLIN.

Your very humble servant, good madam Mechlin; I have taken the liberty to introduce a young gentleman, a friend of mine, to crave your assistance.

Mrs Mech. Any friend of yours, Mr Harpy;—won't you be seated, sir?

Young Love. Ma'am! [*They sit down.*

Mrs Mech. And pray, sir, how can I serve you?

Har. Why, ma'am, the gentleman's situation is——But, sir, you had better state your case to Mrs Mechlin yourself.

Young Love. Why, you are to know, that I am just escaped from the university, where (I need not tell you) you are greatly esteemed

Mrs Mech. Very obliging! I must own, sir, I have had a very great respect for that learned body ever since they made a near and dear friend of mine a doctor of music.

Young Love. Yes, ma'am, I remember the gentleman.

Mrs Mech. Do you know him, sir? I expect him here every minute to instruct a lodger of mine.

Young Love. Not intimately. Just arrived; but last night: upon my coming to town, I found my father deceased, and all his fortune devised to his relict, my mother.

Mrs Mech. What! the whole?

Young Love. Every shilling. That is, for her life.

Mrs Mech. And to what sum may it amount?

Young Love. My mother is eternally telling me, that, after her, I shall inherit fifty or sixty thousand at least!

Mrs Mech. Upon my word, a capital sum!

Young Love. But of what use, my dear Mrs Mechlin, since she refuses to advance me a guinea upon the credit of it; and while the grass grows—You know the proverb——

Mrs Mech. What, I suppose you want something for present subsistence?

Young Love. Just my situation.

Mrs Mech. Have you thought of nothing for yourself?

Young Love. I am resolved to be guided by you.

Mrs Mech. What do you think of a wife?

Young Love. A wife!

Mrs Mech. Come, come, don't despise my advice: when a young man's finances are low, a wife is a much better resource than a usurer; and there are, in this town, a number of kind-hearted widows, that take a pleasure in repairing the injuries done by Fortune to handsome young fellows.

Har. Mrs Mechlin has reason:

Young Love. But, dear ma'am, what can I do with a wife?

Mrs Mech. Do!——Why, like other young fellows who marry ladies a little stricken in years; make her your banker and steward. If you say but the word, before night, I'll give you a widow with two thousand a-year in her pocket.

Young Love. Two thousand a-year! a pretty employment, if the residence could but be dispensed with.

Mrs Mech. What do you mean by residence? Do you think a gentleman, like a pitiful trader, is to be eternally tacked to his wife's petticoat? When she is in town, be you in the country; as she shifts, do you shift. Why, you need not be with her above thirty days in the year; and, let me tell you, you wont find a more easy condition; twelve months subsistence for one month's labour!

Young Love. Two thousand a-year! you are sure?

Mrs Mech. The least penny.

Young Love. Well, madam, you shall dispose of me just as you please.

Mrs Mech. Very well; if you'll call in half an hour at farthest, I believe we shall finish the business.

Young Love. In half an hour?

Mrs Mech. Precisely. Oh! dispatch is the very life and soul of my trade. Mr Harpy will tell you my terms: You will find them reasonable enough.

Har. Oh! I am sure we shall have no disputé about those.

Young Love. No, no!—— [*Going.*

Mrs Mech. Oh, but Mr Harpy! it may be proper to mention, that the gentlewoman, the party, is upwards of sixty.

Young Love. With all my heart; it is the purse, not the person, I want. Sixty! she is quite a girl: I wish with all my soul she was ninety!

Mrs Mech. Get you gone; you are a devil! I see that.

Young Love. Well! for half an hour! sweet Mrs Mechlin, adieu!

[*Exeunt* YOUNG LOVEIT *and* HARPY.

Mrs Mech. Soh! I have provided for my dowager from Devonshire-square; and now to cater for my commissary. Here he comes.

Enter FUNGUS *and* BRIDOUN.

Fun. So, in six weeks——Oh, Mrs Mechlin, any news from the lady?

Mrs Mech. I expect her here every moment. She is conscious, that in this step she descends from her dignity; but, being desirous to screen you from the fury of her noble relations, she is determined to let them see, that the act and deed is entirely her own.

Fun. Very kind, very obliging, indeed!—But, Mrs Mechlin, as the family is so furious, I reckon we shall never be reconciled?

Mrs Mech. I don't know that. When you have bought commissions for her three younger brothers, discharged the mortgage on the paternal estate, and portioned off eight or nine of her sisters, it is not impossible but my lord may be prevailed on to suffer your name——

Fun. Do you think so?

Mrs Mech. But then a work of time, Mr Fungus.

Fun. Ay, ay! I know very well, things of that kind are not brought about in a hurry.

Mrs Mech. But I must prepare matters for the lady's reception.

Fun. By all means. The jewels are sent to her ladyship?

Mrs Mech. To be sure.

Fun. And the ring for her ladyship, and her ladyship's licence?

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, and her ladyship's parson too; all are prepared.

Fun. Parson! why, won't her ladyship please to be married at Powl's?

Mrs Mech. Lord! Mr Fungus, do you think a lady of her rank and condition would bear to be seen in public at once with a person like you?

Fun. That's true, I——

Mrs Mech. No, no! I have sent to Dr Tickletext, and the business will be done in the parlour below.

Fun. As you and her ladyship pleases, good Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. You will get dressed as soon as you can.

Fun. I shall only take a short lesson from Mr Bridoun, and then wait her ladyship's pleasure.—Mrs Mechlin, may my brother be by?

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay! provided his being so is kept a secret from her.

Fun. Never fear. [*Exit* MRS MECHLIN.]—— Well, Mr Bridoun, and you think I am mended a little?

Brid. A great deal.

Fun. And that, in a month or six weeks, I may be able to prance upon a long-tailed horse in Hyde-park, without any danger of falling?

Brid. Without doubt.

Fun. It will be vast pleasant, in the heat of the day, to canter along the king's-road, side by side with the ladies, in the thick of the dust; but that I must not hope for this summer.

Brid. I don't know that, if you follow it close.

Fun. Never fear, I shan't be sparing of—— But come, come, let us go to our business—— John, have the carpenters brought home my new horse?

Enter JOHN.

John. It is here, sir, upon the top of the stairs.

Fun. Then fetch it in, in an instant. [*Exit* JOHN.] What a deal of time and trouble there goes, Mr Bridoun, to the making a gentleman! And do your gentlemen-born now (for I reckon you have had of all sorts) take as much pains as we do?

Brid. To be sure; but they begin at an earlier age.

Fun. There is something in that; I did not know but they might be apter, more cuterer, now, in catching their larning.

Brid. Dispositions do certainly differ.

Fun. Ay, ay! something in nater, I warrant; as they say the children of Blackamoors will swim as soon as they come into the world.

Enter Servants with a wooden horse.

Oh, here he is. Ods me! it is a stately ne beast.

Brid. Here, my lads, place it here—Very well. Where's your switch, Mr Fungus?

Fun. I have it.

Brid. Now, let me see you vault nimbly into your seat. Zounds! you are got on the wrong side, Mr Fungus.

Fun. I am so indeed! but we'll soon rectify that. Now we are right; may I have leave to lay hold of the mane?

Brid. If you can't mount him without.

Fun. I will try; but this steed is so devilish tall——Mr Bridoun, you don't think he'll throw me?

Brid. Never fear.

Fun. Well, if he should, he can't kick; that's one comfort, however.

Brid. Now, mind your position.

Fun. Stay till I recover my wind.

Brid. Let your head be erect.

Fun. There!

Brid. And your shoulders fall easily back.

Fun. Ho!——there!

Brid. Your switch perpendicular in your right hand—your right——that is it: your left to the bridle.

Fun. There.

Brid. Your knees in, and your toes out.

Fun. There.

Brid. Are you ready?

Fun. When you will.

Brid. Off you go.

Fun. Don't let him gallop at first.

Brid. Very well: preserve your position.

Fun. I warrant.

Brid. Does he carry you easy?

Fun. All the world like a cradle. But, Mr Bridoun, I go at a wonderful rate.

Brid. Mind your knees.

Fun. Ay, ay; I can't think but this here horse stands still very near as fast as another can gallop.

Brid. Mind your toes.

Fun. Ho! stop the horse! Zounds! I'm out of the stirrups, I can't sit him no longer; there I go—— [*Falls off.*

Brid. I hope you ar'n't hurt?

Fun. My left hip has a little confusion.

Brid. A trifle, quite an accident; it might happen to the very best rider in England.

Fun. Indeed!

Brid. We have such things happen every day at the manage; but you are vastly improved.

Fun. Why, I am grown bolder a little; and, Mr Bridoun, when do you think I may venture to ride a live horse?

Brid. The very instant you are able to keep your seat on a dead one.

Enter MRS MECHLIN.

Mrs Mech. Bless me, Mr Fungus, how you are trifling your time! I expect lady Sacharissa every moment, and see what a trim you are in!

Fun. I beg pardon, good madam Mechlin.—I'll be equipped in a couple of minutes; where will her ladyship please to receive me?

Mrs Mech. In this room, to be sure! come, stir, stir!

Fun. I have had a little fall from my horse—I'll go as fast as I——Mr Bridoun, will you lend me a lift?

[*Exeunt* FUNGUS *and* BRIDOUN.

Mrs Mech. There——Jenny, show Mrs Loveit in here——Who's there?

Enter SERVANTS.

Pray, move that piece of lumber out of the way. Come, come, make haste! Madam, if you'll step in here for a moment.

Enter MRS LOVEIT.

Mrs Love. So, so, Mrs Mechlin; well, you see I am true to my time; and how have you throve, my good woman?

Mrs Mech. Beyond expectation.

Mrs Love. Indeed! And have you provided a party?

Mrs Mech. Ay, and such a party, you might search the town round before you could meet with his fellow: he'll suit you in every respect.

Mrs Love. As how, as how, my dear woman?

Mrs Mech. A gentleman, by birth and by breeding; none of your little whipper-snapper Jacks, but a countenance as comely, and a presence as portly!—he has one fault, indeed, if you can but overlook that.

Mrs Love. What is it?

Mrs Mech. His age.

Mrs Love. Age! How, how?

Mrs Mech. Why, he is rather under your mark, I am afraid; not above twenty at most.

Mrs Love. Well, well, so he answers in every thing else, we must overlook that; for, Mrs Mechlin, there is no expecting perfection below.

Mrs Mech. True, madam.

Mrs Love. And where is he?

Mrs Mech. I look for him every minute: if you will but step into the drawing-room—I have given him such a picture, that I am sure he is full as impatient as you.

Mrs Love. My dear woman, you are so kind and obliging! But, Mrs Mechlin, how do I look? Don't flatter me; do you think my figure will strike him?

Mrs Mech. Or he must be blind.

Mrs Love. You may just hint black don't become me; that I am a little paler of late; the loss of a husband one loves, will cause an alteration, you know.

Mrs Mech. True; oh, he will make an allowance for that.

Mrs Love. But things will come round in a trice. [*Exit.*

Enter SIMON.

Sim. Madam, Miss Dolly is dizened out, and every thing ready.

Mrs Mech. Let her wait for the commissary here; I will introduce him the instant he is dressed. (*Exit.*

Sim. Miss Dolly, you may come in; your aunt will be here in an instant.

Enter DOLLY *and* JENNY.

Dol. Hush, Simon, hush! to your post.

Sim. I am gone——— [*Exit.*

Dol. Well, Jenny, and have I the true quality-air?

Jen. As perfectly, madam, as if you had been bred to the business; and for figure, I defy the first of them all. For my part, I think Mr Fungus very well off; when the secret comes out, I don't see what right he has to be angry.

Dol. Oh, when once he is noosed, let him struggle as much as he will, the cord will be drawn only the tighter.

Jen. Ay, ay, we may trust to your management. I hope, miss, I shall have the honour to follow your fortunes? there will be no bearing this house when once you have left it.

Dol. No, Jenny, it would be barbarous to rob my aunt of so useful a second; besides, for mistress and maid, we rather know one another a little too well.

Jen. Indeed! But here comes Mr Fungus—remember distance and dignity.

Dol. I warrant you, wench.

Jen. So, I see what I have to hope. Our young filly seems to be secure of her match: but I may jostle her the wrong side of the post; we will have a trial, however: but I must see and find out the brother. [*Aside, and exit.*

Enter Z. FUNGUS *and* MRS MECHLIN.

Fun. Yes, scarlet is vastly becoming, and takes very much with the ladies; quite proper, too, as I have been in the army.

Mrs Mech. Stay where you are till you are announced to the lady—Mr Fungus begs leave to throw himself at your ladyship's feet.

Dol. The mon may draw nigh.

Mrs Mech. Approach.

Fun. One, two, three, ha! Will that do?

Mrs Mech. Pretty well.

Fun. May I begin to make love?

Mrs Mech. When you will.

Fun. Now stand my friend, Mr Gruel. But she has such a deal of dignity that she dashes me quite.

Mrs Mech. Courage.

Fun. Here, hold the paper to prompt me, in case I should stumble.——Madam, or, may it please your ladyship, when I preponderate the granddur of your high ginnyalogy, and the mercantile meanness of my dingy descent; when I consider that your ancestors, like admiral Anson, sailed all round the world in the ark; and that it is a matter of doubt whether I ever had any forefathers or no; I totter, I tremble, at the thoughts of my towering ambition——Ah—a, is not Phaeton next?

Mrs Mech. Hey! [*Looking at the paper.*]—No. Luna.

Fun. Right—ambition—dignity how debased, distance how great! it is as if the link should demand an alliance with Luna, or the bushy bramble court the boughs of the stately Scotch fir; it is as if———What's next?

Mrs Mech. Next—hey! I have lost the place, I am afraid——Come, come, enough has been said; you have showed the sense you entertain of the honour. Upon these occasions, a third person is fittest to cut matters short. Your ladyship hears that———

Dol. Yes, yes, I keen weel enough what the mon would be at. Mrs Mechlin has speared sike things in your great commendations, Mr

Fungus, that I cannot but say I cliked a fancy to you from the very beginning.

Fun. Much obliged to Mrs Mechlin, indeed, please your ladyship———

Dol. You ken I am of as auncient a family as any North Briton can boast?

Fun. I know it full well, please your ladyship.

Dol. And that I shall get the ill-wull of a' my kin by this match?

Fun. I am sorry for that, please your ladyship.

Dol. But, after the ceremony, it will be proper to withdraw from town for a short space of time.

Fun. Please your ladyship, what your ladyship pleases.

Dol. In order to gi' that gossip Scandal just time to tire her tongue.

Fun. True, your ladyship.

Dol. I mun expect that the folk will mak free wi' my character in choosing sike a consort as you.

Fun. And with me, too, please your ladyship.

Dol. Wi' you, mon!

Mrs Mech. Hold your tongue!

Dol. Donna you think the honor will dra mickle envy upon you?

Fun. Oh, to be sure, please your ladyship. I did not mean that.

Dol. Weel, I say, we'll gang into the country.

Fun. As soon as your ladyship pleases; I have a sweet house, hard by Reading.

Dol. You ha'? that's right.

Fun. One of the most pleasantest places that can be again.

Dol. Ha' you a good prospect?

Fun. Twenty stage-coaches drive every day by the door, besides carts and gentlemen's carriages.

Dol. Ah, that will———

Mrs Mech. Oh, your ladyship will find all things prepared: in the next room the attorney waits with the writings.

Fun. The honour of your ladyship's hand——

Dol. Maister Fungus, you're a little too hasty. [*Exit.*

Mrs Mech. Not till after the nuptials; you must not expect to be too familiar at first.

Fun. Pray, when do you think we shall bring the bedding about?

Mrs Mech. About the latter end of the year, when the winter sets in.

Fun. Not before?

Enter YOUNG LOVEIT, *hastily.*

Young Love. I hope, Madam Mechlin, I have not exceeded my hour; but I expected Mr Harpy would call.

Mrs Mech. He is in the next room with a lady. Oh, Mr Fungus, this gentleman is ambitious of obtaining the nuptial benediction from the same hands after you.

Fun. He's heartily welcome: What, and is his wife a woman of quality, too?

Mrs Mech. No, no; a cit; but monstrously rich. But your lady will wonder——

Fun. Ay, ay: but you'll follow? for I shan't know what to say to her when we are alone. [*Exit.*

Mrs Mech. I will send you, sir, your spouse in an instant: the gentlewoman is a widow; so you may throw in what raptures you please.

Young Love. Never fear! [*Exit* MRS MECHLIN.] And yet this scene is so new, how to acquit myself—let me recollect—some piece of a play now—' Vouchsafe, divine perfection!' No, that won't do for a dowager; it is too humble and whining. But see, the door opens, so I have no time for rehearsal——I have it—' Clasped in ' the folds of love, I'll meet my doom, and act ' my——

Enter MRS LOVEIT.

Mrs Love. Ha!

Young Love. By all that's monstrous, my mother!

Mrs Love. That rebel my son, as I live!

Young Love. The quotation was quite apropos! Had it been a little darker, I might have revived the story of Œdipus.

Mrs Love. So, sirrah, what makes you from your studies?

Young Love. A small hint I received of your inclinations brought me here, madam, in order to prevent, if possible, my father's fortune from going out of the family.

Mrs Love. Your father! how dare you disturb his dear ashes? you know well enough how his dear memory melts me; and that at his very name my heart is ready to break!

Young Love. Well said, my old matron of Ephesus! [*Aside.*

Mrs Love. That is what you want, you disobedient, unnatural monster! but complete, accomplish your cruelty; send me the same road your villanies forced your father to take! [*Cries.*

Enter MRS MECHLIN.

Mrs Mech. Hey-day! What the deuce have we here? our old lady in tears!

Mrs Love. Disappointed a little; that's all.

Mrs Mech. Pray, madam, what can occasion—

Mrs Love. Lord bless me, Mrs Mechlin, what a blunder you have made!

Mrs Mech. A blunder! as how?

Mrs Love. Do you know who you have brought me?

Mrs Mech. Not perfectly.

Mrs Love. My own son! that's all.

Mrs Mech. Your son!

Mrs Lov. Ay, that rebellious, unnatural——

Mrs Mech. Blunder, indeed! But who could have thought it! why, by your account, ma'am, I imagined your son was a child scarce out of his frocks.

Mrs Lov. Here's company coming, so my reputation will be blasted for ever.

Mrs Mech. Never fear; leave the care on't to me.

Enter FUNGUS *and* DOLLY.

Fun. What is the matter? You make such a noise, there is no such thing as minding the writings.

Mrs Mech. This worthy lady, an old friend of mine, not having set eyes on her son since the death of his father, and being apprised by me that here she might meet with him, came with a true maternal affection to give him a little wholesome advice.

Mrs Lov. Well said, Mrs Mechlin!

Mrs Mech. Which the young man returned in a way so brutal and barbarous, that his poor mother——Be comforted, ma'am; you had better repose on my bed.

Mrs Lov. Any where, to get out of his sight.

Mrs Mech. Here, Jenny!

Mrs Lov. Do you think you can procure me another party?

Mrs Mech. Never doubt it.

Mrs Lov. Ugh, ugh!—— [*Exit coughing.*

Mrs Mech. Bear up a little, ma'am.

Fun. Fie upon you! you have thrown the old gentlewoman into the stericks.

Young Love. Sir?

Fun. You a man! you are a scandal, a shame to your sect!

Enter DR CATGUT.

Dr Cat. Come, come, Mrs Mechlin, are the couple prepared? the fiddles are tuned, the bows ready rosined, and the whole band——Oh, you, sir, are one party, I reckon: but where is the—Ah, Dolly! what, are you here, my dear?

Dol. Soh!

Fun. Dolly? Who the devil can this be?

Dr Cat. As nice and as spruce, too! the bridemaid, I warrant: why, you look as blooming, you slut!

Fun. What can this be! Hark ye, sir!

Dr Cat. Well, sir.

Fun. Don't you think you are rather too familiar with a lady of her rank and condition?

Dr Cat. Rank and condition! what, Dolly?

Fun. Dolly! what a plague possesses the man? this is no Dolly, I tell you.

Dr Cat. No!

Fun. No, this is Lady Scracarissa Mackirkincroft.

Dr Cat. Who!

Fun. Descended from the old, old, old Earl of Glendowery.

Dr Cat. What, she? Dolly Mechlin?

Fun. Dolly devil! the man's out of his wits, I believe!

Enter MRS MECHLIN.

Oh, Mrs Mechlin, will you set this matter to rights?

Mrs Mech. How! Dr Catgut?

Fun. The strangest fellow here has danced up stairs, and has Dolly, Dolly, Dollyed my lady—who the plague can he be?

Dr Cat. Oh, apropos, Molly Mechlin! what, is this the man that is to be married? The marriage will never hold good; why he is more frantic and madder——

Fun. Mad! John, fetch me the foils; I'll carte and tierce you, you scoundrel!

Enter ISAAC FUNGUS *and* JENNY.

I. Fun. Where's brother? it an't over? you ben't married, I hope?

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; why, what is the——

I. Fun. Pretty hands you are got into! Your servant, good madam; what, this is the person, I warrant? ay, how pretty the puppet is painted! Do you know who she is?

Z. Fun. Who she is! without doubt.

I. Fun. No, you don't, brother Zac; only the spawn of that devil incarnate, dressed out as—

Z. Fun. But hark ye, Isaac? are—don't be in a hurry—are you sure——

I. Fun. Sure—the girl of the house, abhorring their scandalous project, has freely confessed the whole scheme. Jenny, stand forth, and answer boldly to what I shall ask: Is not this wench the woman's niece of the house?

Jen. I fancy she will hardly deny it.

I. Fun. And is not this mistress of yours a most profligate——

Mrs Mech. Come, come, Master Isaac, I will save you the trouble, and cut this matter short in an instant. Well then, this girl, this Dolly, is my niece; and what then?

Z. Fun. And arn't you ashamed?

Young Love. She ashamed! I would have told you, but I could not get you to listen; why she brought me here to marry my mother!

Z. Fun. Marry your mother! Lord have mercy on us, what a monster! to draw a young man in to be guilty of incense! But, hark ye, brother Isaac? [*They retire.*

Dr Cat. Gad's my life, what a sweet project I have helped to destroy! But come, Dolly, I'll piece thy broken fortunes again: thou hast a good pretty voice; I'll teach thee a thrill and a shake, perch thee amongst the boughs at one of

the gardens; and then, as a mistress, which, as the world goes, is a much better station than that of a wife, not the proudest of them all———

Mrs Mech. Mistress! No, no, we have not managed our matters so badly. Hark'e, Mr Commissary?

Z. Fun. Well, what do you want?

Mrs Mech. Do you propose to consummate your nuptials?

Z. Fun. That's a pretty question, indeed!

Mrs Mech. You have no objection then to paying the penalty, the contract here that Mr Harpy has drawn?

Z. Fun. The contract! hey, brother Isaac!

I. Fun. Let me see it.

Mrs Mech. Soft you there, my maker of candles; it is as well where it is: but you need not doubt of its goodness; I promise you, the best advice has been taken.

Z. Fun. What a damned fiend! What a harpy!

Mrs Mech. And why so, my good Master Fungus? is it because I have practised that trade by retail, which you have carried on in the gross? What injury do I do the world? I feed on their follies, 'tis true; and the game, the plunder, is fair: But the fangs of you and your tribe,

A whole people have felt, and for ages will feel.
To their candour and justice I make my appeal;
Though a poor humble scourge in a national cause,
As I trust I deserve, I demand your applause.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

NECK OR NOTHING.

BY

GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN	WOMEN.
Mr Stockwell, *a citizen.*	Mrs Stockwell, *wife to* Mr Stockwell.
Sir Harry Harlowe, *a country gentleman.*	Miss Nancy Stockwell, *her daughter.*
Mr Belford, *in love with* Miss Nancy.	Jenny, *her maid.*
Martin, Belford's *servant.*	
Slip, *servant to* Harlowe.	

Scene—London.

ACT. I.

SCENE I.—*A street.*

Enter Martin.

Mart. I am sick as a dog of being a valet!—running after other people's business, and neglecting my own———this low life is the devil!——I've had a taste of the gentleman, and shall never lose it. 'Tis thy own fault, my little Martin! Thou would'st always play small games; when, had you but had the face to put yourself forward a little, some well jointured widow had taken you into her post-chariot, and made your fortune at at once. A fellow of my wit and spirit should have broke twice, and set up again by this time.

Enter Slip.

Slip. Hey! is not that, that rascal, Martin, yonder?

Mar. Can that be my modest friend, Slip? [*Aside.*

Slip. The same, i'faith!

Mar. 'Tis he, as I live!

Slip. My friend, happily met!———

Mar. My dear, I embrace you!—Not seeing you among the beau-monde, I was afraid there had been some fresh misunderstanding between you and the law.

Slip. Faith! my dear, I have had a narrow escape, since I saw you. I had like to have been preferred in some of our settlements abroad, but I found there was no doing the business by deputy, so———

Mar. Did not accept of the place, ha!——why, what little mischief had'st thou been at?

Slip. Why, I don't know—meeting one night with a certain Portuguese Jew-merchant, in one of the back-streets here by the exchange——(I was a little in liquor I believe—piping hot from a turtle-feast) it came into my giddy head to stop him, out of mere curiosity to ask what news from Germany—nothing more, and the fellow, not understanding good English, would needs

have it, that I asked him for something else.—He bawl'd out, up came the watch, down was I laid in the kennel, and then carried before a magistrate.—He clapped me on a stone doublet, that I could not get off my back for two months.

Mar. Two months, say you?

Slip. And there I might have rotted, if I had not had great friends; a certain lady of quality's woman's cousin, that was kept by Mr Quirk, of Thavies-Inn, you must know, was in love with me, and she————

Mar. Brought you in not guilty, I warrant. Oh! great friends is a great matter.

Slip. This affair really gave me some serious reflections.

Mar. No doubt, it spoiled you for a newsmonger: no more intelligence from foreign countries, ha!

Slip. Well but, Martin! what's thy history since I saw thee?

Mar. Um! a novel only, sir: why, I am ashamed to say it; I am but an honorary rascal, as well as yourself.—I did try my luck, indeed, at Epsom, and Newmarket; but the knowing ones were taken in, and I was obliged to return to service again.—But a master without money, implies a servant without wages; I am not in love with my condition, I promise you.

Slip. I am with mine, I assure you: I am retired from the great world—that's my taste now—and live in the country, with one Mr Harlowe—piping hot from his travels. 'Tis a charming young fellow! Drinking, hunting, and wenching, my boy!—a man of universal knowledge. Then I am his privy counsellor, and we always play the devil together. That amuses one, you know, and keeps one out of mischief.

Mar. Yes, pretty lambs! But what makes you at London now? whither are you bound?

Slip. To yonder great house.

Mar. What, Mr Stockwell's?

Slip. The same. You must know his daughter is engaged to my master.

Mar. Miss Stockwell to your master?

Slip. 'Tis not above six weeks ago, that my master's father, sir Harry Harlowe, was here upon a visit to his old friend, and then the matter was settled between them—quite a la mode, I assure you.

Mar. How do you mean?

Slip. The old folk struck the bargain, without the consent of the young ones, or even their seeing one another.

Mar. Tip top, I assure you; and every thing's agreed?

Slip. Signed and sealed by the two fathers; the lady and her fortune both ready to be delivered. Twenty thousand, you rogue!—ready rhino down! and only wait for young master to write a receipt.

Mar. Whew! Then my young master may e'en make a leg to his fortune, and set up his staff somewhere else.

Slip. Thy master.

Mar. Ay, he's dying for the—twenty thousand—that's all——but since your master——

[*Going.*

Slip. Oh! there you're safe enough; my master will never marry Miss Stockwell: there happens to be a small rub in the way.

Mar. What rub?

Slip. Only married already.

Mar. How?

Slip. Why, his father would marry him here in town, it seems, and he—chose to be married in the country—that's all. The truth is, our young gentleman managed matters with the young lady so ill, or so well, that, upon his father's return, there was hot consulting among the relations; and the lady being of a good family, and having a smart fighting fellow of a brother in the army—why, my master, who hates quarrelling, spoke to the old gentleman, and the affair's hushed up by a marriage, that's all.

Mar. Um! an entire new face of affairs!

Slip. My master's wedding-cloaths, and mine, are all ordered for the country, and I am to follow them, as soon as I have seen the family here, and redeemed my old master's promise, that lies in pawn.

Mar. Old master's promise!—let me think—

Slip. 'Twas what brought me to town, or I had not shook my honest friend by the fist. Martin, good morrow!—what, in the dumps?—we shall meet again, man.

Mar. Let me alone, I have a thought—hark you, my dear? is thy master known to old Stockwell?

Slip. Never saw him in his life.

Mar. That's brave, my boy!—[*Hits him a slap on the back.*]—Art thou still a cock of the game, Slip? and shall we?—No; I doubt—I doubt that damned Jew-merchant sticks in thy stomach, and you are turned dunghill, you dog!

Slip. Try me. A good sailor won't die a dry death at land for one hurricane. Speak out!—you would pass your master upon the family for mine, and marry him to the lady? is not that the trick?

Mar. That! I have a trick worth two on't; I know Miss Nancy is a girl of taste, and I have a prettier fellow in my eye for her.

Slip. Ay, who's he?

Mar. Myself, you puppy!

Slip. That's brave, my boy!

[*Slaps him on the back.*

Mar. I'm in love with her to——

Slip. To the value of twenty thousand pounds! I approve your flame.

Mar. I will take the name and shape of your master.

Slip. Very well!

Mar. Marry Miss Stockwell.

Slip. Agreed.

Mar. Touch the twenty thousand.

Slip. Um!—Well, well!

Mar. And disappear before matters come to an eclaircissement.

Slip. Um! That article wants a little explanation, my honest friend.

Mar. How so?

Slip. You talk of disappearing with the lady's fortune, and never mention Slip in the treaty.

Mar. Oh! we shall disappear together, to be sure. I have more honour than to go without you.

Slip. Well, on that condition, I am content to play your back hand. But hold, hold! how will you pass yourself for my master, in a family where you are so well known?

Mar. Hold your fool's tongue—this is my first visit to them. I returned but yesterday to my master. You must know, I asked his leave to be absent a week, and I made free with a month: 'twas a party of pleasure, so I made bold. During my absence, he saw this lady, liked her person, adored her fortune, and now, by my help, hopes to be in possession of both in a few days.

Slip. And you'll do the lady the honour to help her to a better match?

Mar. She'll think so, I believe.

Slip. Well said, conceit!—But what sort of people are your father and mother-in-law?

Mar. I am told he is a mere citizen, who, thinking himself very wise, is often outwitted; and his lady has as much vanity in her way; will never be old, though turned of sixty; and as irresolute and capricious as a girl of fifteen. And Miss, I suppose, is like all other misses, wants to be her own mistress, and her husband's; and, in the mean time, is governed by her chambermaid, who will be too hard for us both, if we don't look about us.

Slip. But hark'e! what shall we do with the old gentlemen's letter that I'm to deliver? This will knock us all up!

Mar. Write another.

Slip. That's easier said than done—but I'll do my best, as you can't write.

Mar. Do you see after my wedding cloaths, that they do not set out for the country. We have no time to lose.

Slip. My master's will fit you to a hair.

Mar. But stay, stay; I must see my master first. If he should appear and surprize us, we're in a fine pickle. I must make him keep house for a few days—I'll think of a lie as I go—Egad I have it already—I'll to him, and meet you afterwards at the tavern; there take a glass, cast this coarse skin, whip on the gentleman, and shame the first men of fashion in the kingdom.

[*Exit.*

Slip. If impudence will do our business, 'tis done,
And the twenty thousand are our own.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An apartment in* MR STOCKWELL'S *house.*

Enter MISS NANCY *and* JENNY.

Nan. You know, Jenny, that Belford has got into my heart, and if I consent to marry this man, 'twill be the death of me. Advise me then, and don't be so teazing.

Jen. Lud! what advice can I give you? I have but two in the world; one is, to forget your lover, and t'other, to disobey your father. You have too much love to take the one, and I too much conscience to give t'other; so we are just where we were, madam.

Nan. Don't torment me, Jenny.

Jen. Why, I fancy we might find a way to reconcile your love and my conscience.

Nan. How, how, my dear girl?

Jen. Suppose we were to open the affair to your mamma?

Nan. Nay, now your jesting is cruel.

Jen. I never was more in earnest, madam. She loves flattery dearly; and she loves her daughter dearly. I'll warrant, with a sigh, and a tear, and a handkerchief, she makes her husband break his word with young Harlowe in a quarter of an hour after his arrival.

Nan. Not unlikely; but if——

Jen. What, at your ifs? no doubts, I beg, where I am concerned.

Nan. But you know my poor mother is so unsettled a creature.

Jen. Why, that's true enough; the last speaker is her oracle, so let us lose no time to bring her over to—Hark! Here she comes—do you retire, till I have prepared her for you. [*Exit* NANCY.

Enter MRS STOCKWELL.

Well, of all the women in London, sure there never was such a temper as my lady's.

Mrs Stock. What can have set this girl against me? [*Aside.*

Jen. Such good humour, and good sense together, seldom meet—then such a perpetual smile upon her features! Well, her's is a sort of a face that can never grow old; what would I give for such a lasting face as she has!

Mrs Stock. Hussy, hussy! you're a flatterer!

[*Taps her on the shoulder.*

Jen. Ah!—Madam, is it you? I vow you made me start. Miss Nancy and I had just been talking of you, and we agreed you were one of the best of women, the most reasonable friend, the tenderest mother, and the—the—the——

Mrs Stock. Nay, that's too much. I have my

failings, and my virtues too, Jenny—in one thing, indeed, I am very unlike other women; I always hearken to reason.

Jen. That's what I said, madam.

Mrs Stock. I am neither headstrong nor fantastical; neither——

Jen. No, sweet lady, the smallest twine may lead you. Miss, says I, hear reason, like your mamma; will so good a mother, do you think, force her daughter to marry against her inclinations?

Mrs Stock. I force my child's inclinations! No, I make the case my own. But tell me, (there's a good girl) has my daughter an aversion to young Harlowe?

Jen. I don't say that, madam—that is—aversion—to be sure—but I believe she hates him like the devil.

Mrs Stock. Poor thing! poor thing! and perhaps her little heart is beating for another?

Jen. Oh, that's a certain rule! when a young woman hates her husband, 'tis taken for granted she loves another man. For example, you yourself, as you have often told me, hated the sight of Mr Stockwell, when first he was proposed for your husband—Why? only because you were in love, poor lady, with captain—you know who—that was killed at the siege—you know where.

Mrs Stock. Why will you name him, Jenny? [*Wipes her eyes.*

Jen. Tender lady!

Mrs Stock. Why, indeed, had that fine young creature survived his wounds, I should never have married Mr Stockwell, that I will say.

Jen. Then you know how to pity your daughter. Her heart suffers now, what yours did—before that siege, madam.

Mrs Stock. Say you so? poor girl! and who is it has found the way to her heart?

Jen. No other than the young gentleman that has been so constant at cards with you lately.

Mrs Stock. Who, Belford?

Jen. The same, and a fine spirited young fellow it is.

Enter MISS NANCY.

Nan. Pardon my folly, my misfortune, dear madam, if I cannot conform in all my sentiments with your's, and my father's——

Mrs Stock. It will happen, child, sometimes, that a daughter's heart may not be disposed to comply exactly with the views and schemes of a parent; but then, a parent should act with tenderness. My dear, I pity your distress: Belford has my approbation, I assure you.

Nan. You are too good, madam!

Jen. Your approbation is not enough, madam; will you answer for master's too? He's a stubborn bit of stuff, you know; he will not always hearken to reason.

Mrs Stock. But he shall, Jenny; stubborn as he is, I'll soften him. I'll take Belford under my protection—Here comes my husband—I have taken my resolution, and you shall see how I'll bring him about presently.

Enter MR STOCKWELL.

My dear, you're come in the very nick of time; I have just changed my mind.

Stock. You are always changing it, I think.

Mrs Stock. I always hearken to reason, Mr Stockwell.

Stock. Well, and which way does the wind set now?

Mrs Stock. Why, I have taken a resolution not to marry my daughter to young Harlowe.

Stock. Hey! that's chopping about, indeed!

Mrs Stock. Nay, but, my dear, hear me, and let us reason a little; here's a better offer for Nancy—Belford has asked her of me.

Stock. Belford a better!

Mrs Stock. Nay, but don't be obstinate, child! he is not, indeed, so rich as the other; but what are riches to content, Mr Stockwell?

Stock. And what is content without riches, Mrs Stockwell?

Mrs Stock. But he's a gentleman, my dear, and, out of regard to his family, we may very well excuse his fortune.

Jen. Well said, madam! this will do. [*Aside.*

Stock. Ha, ha, ha! that's because you were a gentlewoman—but I, being a downright cit, think just the reverse; and, out of regard to his fortune, if he had one, might excuse his family. I have no great objection to the man; but is not our word and honour engaged to another?

Mrs Stock. Eh! that's true, indeed; but—

Stock. Has my old friend, sir Harry Harlowe, done any thing to——

Mrs Stock. I don't accuse him, my dear.

Stock. Or has his son refused to comply?

Mrs Stock. Not in the least, that I know of.

Jen. Never flinch, madam. } [*Aside.*
Mrs Stock. Never fear, Jenny. }

Nan. But I have never seen him, papa.

Mrs Stock. No, Mr Stockwell, she has never seen him——

Stock. So much the better, Mrs Stockwell; he'll be a greater novelty, and please her the better, and the longer for it.

Mrs Stock. There is some reason in that, Jenny.

Jen. Is there, madam? then I have not a bit about me.

Nan. But to marry without inclination, sir! think of that.

Mrs Stock. Ay, think of that, Mr Stockwell.

Stock. I never thought of it for myself, nor you neither, my dear; and why should our daughter think herself wiser than her parents?

Mrs Stock. Ay, why, indeed?—there's no answering that, Jenny.

Jen. I see there is not—What a woman! [*Aside.*

Stock. It would be such an affront, as never could be forgiven. Consider, dame, the instruments are signed, preparations made, and the bridegroom expected every minute; 'tis too far gone to be recalled with any honour.

Mrs Stock. Good lack-a-day! very true, very true!

Jen. Well said, weather-cock! about and about we go! this woman betrays the whole sex—She won't contradict her own husband. [*Aside.*

Mrs Stock. You are witness, Jenny, I did all I could for poor Belford?

Jen. To be sure; you took him under your protection—a noble patroness, truly!

Stock. Hey! whom have we got here? I'll be hanged if this is not my son-in-law's servant—— Now, girl, we shall hear.

Enter SLIP, *in a hurry.*

Slip. Ladies and gentlemen, I am come—let me recover my breath—I come—Oh! I come with mine, and my master's compliments to your honour, and my lady, our best love and services to pretty miss, and—madam, I'm your obedient Black-a-moor. [*To* JENNY.

Stock. Um! the fellow has humour, I promise you.—Well, sirrah, where's your master?

Slip. My master, and your son, is on his way to throw himself at the feet of this angelic creature. His impatience, madam, can equal nothing but your beauty.

Stock. Well, but where is he, where is he?

Slip. He's but just arrived from the country; he treads upon my heels, and I had only the start of him to tell you, that he will but whip on clean linen, and wait on you in the snapping of a finger.

Stock. O, fy upon him! what need all this ceremony between us? why did not he come hither directly? He knows he may make my house his own.

Slip. Oh, sir, he designs it; but the first time—pardon me, sir—He knows the world better than to treat you so cavalierly as that—No, no; he's not that man, I can assure you; though I'm his valet, yet I'd give the devil his due.

Mrs Stock. Is he so extremely well bred? Daughter, you'll be infinitely happy.

Stock. Does not my old friend, Harlowe, his father, come with him?

Slip. Sir, I grieve to tell it you; such was his design, but an unforeseen accident has prevented him; which, I assure you, gives him great pain.

Stock. Ay! what's the matter?

Slip. The gout, sir, the gout!

Mrs Stock. Poor gentleman!

Slip. He was seized in his right foot, the evening before we set out, but—I have a letter from him. [*Gives a letter.*

Stock. [*Puts on his spectacles, and reads.*] 'To doctor, doctor Clackit, physician near St 'Sepulchre's church.'

Slip. Lud, lud! that's not it—[*Takes out letters.*] Let me see!

Stock. St Sepulchre's church!—I find the doctor chuses to live among his patients.

Slip. Eh, eh! that's so good! you're a very wag, sir!—He, he, he!—let me see—Oh, here's one like it.—To Mr Stockwell; the same. I am afraid you'll hardly be able to make it out—shall I read it to you? Oh, this unlucky gout!

Stock. I see it has affected his hands too.—Why 'tis scarce legible; and ill spelt, too.

Slip. The gout, sir,—may it never affect you, sir, nor madam Stockwell, Miss Nancy, that young woman there, nor any of the good company.

Stock. [*Reads.*] 'My much honoured friend '—few words are best in my condition; this 'damned gout has laid hold upon me, and 'won't let me attend my son, for to be present 'at his matrimony.'—For to be present at his matrimony!—I think his hand and style too much altered.

Slip. The gout, sir.

Stock. [*Reading.*] 'I look upon this conjuncture of our families.' Conjuncture!—a very odd phrase!

Slip. The gout, dear sir, the gout! He's quite another man in it.

Stock. 'I look upon this conjuncture of our 'families, as the comfort of my age—The sooner 'it is done the more comfort I shall have—I 'don't doubt but you'll like my son, whom I have 'sent with a most trusty and faithful servant, 'who deserves your friendship and favour.'

Slip. O law, sir!—I am quite ashamed.

Stock. 'I am, my dear brother, your's, &c. 'till death.

HENRY HARLOWE.

I am very sorry, sir, we can't have the old gentleman's company.—But who is this gay young fellow coming towards us?—Can this be my son-in-law?

Slip. What the devil should ail him? Look at him, Miss; observe him, madam—Is not he a pretty fellow?

Stock. What is he doing!

Slip. Only paying his chairman.—Generous as a prince. [*To* JENNY.

Stock. Not ill made, indeed!—You'll only be too happy, child.

Nancy. I wish I could think so, madam.

Slip. Dress us but as well, and we'll cut out our masters, ten to one. All my fancy, I assure you, ladies. [*Aside.*

Enter MARTIN, *as young* HARLOWE.

Mart. Slip!

Slip. Your honour!

Mart. Mr Stockwell, I presume, my illustrious father——

Slip. The same, sir, in *proprium personam.*

Stock. My dear son, welcome! let me embrace you.

Mar. You do me too much honour; my superabundant joy is too inexpressible to express the—This I flatter myself [*To* MRS STOCKWELL.] is the brilliant beauty, destined to the arms of happy Mart—Harlowe—Gad! I'd like to have forgot my own name. [*Aside.*

Nancy. An impertinent, absurd coxcomb! [*Aside.*

Stock. Nay, nay, son-in-law, not so fast; that's my wife. Here's my daughter Nancy.

Mar. A fine creature! [*Salutes her.*] Madam, I have seen the world! and from all the world, here would I chuse a wife, and a mistress—a family of beauties; let me die!

Stock. Excessively gallant! He has wit, I assure you, daughter.

Jen. And taste too, madam.

Nancy. And impudence, I'm sure!

Mar. [*Singing to* MRS STOCKWELL.] 'With a 'shape, and a face, and an air, and a grace!' Ha, ha!—Just, just as our old gentleman told me. There you'll see madam Stockwell, says he, the agreeable still; take care of your heart, boy; she's a dangerous beauty, though her daughter may be by.

Mrs Stock. O fie, fie, fie!

Mar. I but repeat my father's words, madam, confirmed by my own observation. Ah boy, says he, I wish with all my heart, that my dear friend Mr Stockwell was dead! I'd marry her tomorrow.

Stock. I'm much obliged to him, faith!

Mrs Stock. And so am I, I am sure, sir.

Mar. I but repeat my father's words, sir.

Mrs Stock. My esteem for your father, sir, is mutual, and I am heartily sorry we could not have the pleasure of his company.

Mar. Oh! madam, he was damned mad that he could not be at the wedding. He had flattered himself these two months with the hopes of dancing a minuet with Mrs Stockwell.

Slip. Two months—Whew!—and 'tis but six weeks he has known her; he'll knock us all up, if I don't interfere—[*Aside.*]—Sir, sir Harry begs you'll hasten the ceremonials, that he may have the pleasure of his daughter's company as soon as possible.

Stock. Well, well, every thing is signed and sealed; nothing remains, that I know of, but to finish the affair at once, and pay you my daughter's portion.

Mar. 'Pay you my daughter's portion!'—— that's all, sir; come along, sir, I wait on you to your closet.—Slip, go with my civilities to the marquis of—[*Aloud.*] go this moment, you dog, and secure us horses, and let them be bridled and saddled, and ready at a minute's warning, [*Softly.*]—and don't forget my compliments to the marchioness. [*Aloud.*

Slip. I fly, sir! ladies, your most obedient. [*Exit* SLIP.

Mar. Come along, sir, to your closet.

Stock. Stay, son, stay!—to return to the old gentleman.

Mar. Oh, sir, we'll return to him when the portion's paid.

Stock. No, no; first satisfy my curiosity about this unlucky law-suit of his.

Mar. O lud! Slip not here now! [*Aside.*

Stock. You seem disturbed, son-in-law, has any thing——

Mar. Eh! pox o' this question. [*Aside.*] I have such a memory!—[*Puts his hand to his forehead.*] as much forgot to send Slip to the duke of—as if I had no manner of acquaintance with him. I'll call him back; Slip!

Stock. He'll be back again presently—but, sir——

Mar. He should have told me of this damned law-suit. [*Aside.*

Stock. Has it been brought to a hearing?

Mar. O, yes, sir, and the affair is quite over.

Stock. Ay, already!

Mar. The wrong box, I'm afraid! [*Aside.*

Stock. And I hope you have got your cause?

Mar. With costs of suit, I assure you, sir.

Stock. I am extremely glad of it.

Mrs Stock. Thank heaven 'tis so well over!

Mar. Oh, the family had the law-suit so much at heart, the lawyers should have had every farthing we were worth in the world, before we'd have been cast.

Stock. Um! that would have been carrying it a little too far; but, as it was, it cost him a pretty penny, ha?

Mar. That it did, sir: but justice! Oh, justice, sir, is so fine a thing, we cannot pay too dear for it.

Stock. Very true; but exclusive of the expence, this has been a troublesome affair to my friend.

Mar. You can have no idea of it, sir—especially with such a tricking son of a whore, as he had to do with.

Stock. Son of a whore? He told me his antagonist was a lady!

Mar. I thought I was in the wrong box. [*Aside.*] A lady call you her? Yes, yes, a fine lady! but she had got an old pettifogging rascal for her attorney, and he—it was he that was such a plague to our old gentleman.—But damn this cause, let us call another—I'm for nothing now but flames, darts, daggers, Cupids and Venuses, and madam Stockwell, and Miss Nancy—— [*Boxing to them.*

Mrs Stock. The pink of complaisance!

Nancy. The fellow's a fool, and I'll die before I'll have him. [*Aside.*

Stock. Well said, son-in-law! a spirited fellow, faith! Come, we'll in and see things ready.

Mar. Shan't I wait upon you to your closet first, sir?

Stock. As soon as the ceremony's over, son.—Come, I'll shew you the way.

Mar. Eh! if I could but have touched beforehand, I'd have waved the ceremony. [*Aside.*]—Madam, [*To* MRS STOCKWELL.] may I hope for the honour! [*Offering to lead her out.*

Mrs Stock. Oh, sweet sir?—Daughter, you'll have a pretty fellow for your husband, [*Aside to* NANCY.] [*Exeunt.*

Nancy. There's a lover for you, Jenny!

Jenny. Not for me, madam, I assure you. What, snap at the old kite, when such a tender chick is before him!

Nancy. Not a civil word to his mistress, but quite gallant to her mother.

Jen. As much as to say, a fig for you! I'm in love with your fortune.

Nancy. A fig for him; a conceited puppy! I'm in love with Belford; but how to get at him, Jenny?

Jen. Ah! poor bird! you're limed by the wing, and struggling will but make it worse.

Nancy. Not struggle! Ruin is better than this coxcomb! Prithee, advise me.

Jen. Don't tempt me.—I pity you so, that I could give you a sprightly piece of advice; and you are in so desperate a way, that I know you'd follow it.

Nancy. Follow it!——I'll follow any advice, Jenny.

Jen. O, yes, to follow your own inclinations; that's a good young lady.——Well, I am at present much given to mischief.——So, if you'll go into your chamber, lock the door, and let us lay our little heads together for half an hour, if we don't counterplot your wise papa, and his intended son-in-law—we deserve never to be married, or, if we are, to be governed by our husbands.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A hall in* STOCKWELL'S *house.*

Enter BELFORD.

Bel. I AM surprised that Martin has not returned to tell me his success with Jenny——He advised me not to stir from home, and said I might be assured every thing goes well, and I should hear from him——But still the impatience of my heart cannot bear this delay——I must be near the field of battle, let what will be the consequence; I hope I shall get a sight of Martin, and not unluckily light on the old gentleman: 'sdeath he's here!——O, no, 'tis Jenny; my heart was in my mouth.

Enter JENNY.

Dear Jenny, where's your mistress?

Jen. Winding herself up for your sake, and, by my advice, to a proper pitch of disobedience, that's all—but—

Bel. But what? You hesitate, Jenny, and seem concerned!

Jen. Concerned! why, we're undone, that's all. Your rival is come to town.

Bel. How!

Jen. And is this morning to marry madam.

Bel. Not while I'm alive, I can tell him that.—But, prithee, who is this happy rival of mine?

Jen. 'Tis one Mr Harlowe.

Bel. Harlowe!

Jen. A gentleman of Dorsetshire.

Bel. I know all of that country, and can recollect no Harlowe, but the son of sir Harry Harlowe, and he———

Jen. Ay, and he is your rival.

Bel. If I had no more to fear from your mistress, than from my rival, as you call him——

Jen. Oh, you are very clever now, an't you? What would you be at now?

Bel. The truth only; the real, certain truth.

Jen. Ay, what's that?

Bel. Why, that this Harlowe is the son of sir Harry Harlowe of Dorsetshire, and my friend, my particular friend.

Jen. Yes, and so particular, that he will take your mistress from you.

Bel. He shall take my life first.

Jen. You said that before; have you nothing else to say?

Bel. I say, that this Harlowe, my friend, was married last week in the country, that's all.

Jen. And that's enough, if it is true; but I have a small addition to your news.

Bel. What's that?

Jen. That the aforesaid John Harlowe, esq; your particular friend, and son to sir Harry Harlowe of Dorsetshire, is now within, waiting for my young lady's hand; that's all.

Bel. Jenny, no jesting, you distract me!

Jen. 'Tis but too true; he's this minute gone in with my master and mistress, to settle preliminaries.

Bel. Impossible! he's my intimate acquaintance, and writ to me, not a week ago, as I tell you. I have his letter at my lodgings.

Jen. And what says he there?

Bel. That he's privately married to a lady of condition.

Jen. How can this be reconciled? Go fetch that letter, we have no time to lose.

Bel. But what is Martin doing?

Jen. Martin, who's he?

Bel. Martin, my servant, whom I sent to assist you.

Jen. Why, sure love has turned your brain, sir—I have seen no Martin, not I!

Bel. The rascal, then, is run away from me again. I have spoiled him by my indulgence. He left me for a month, and returned but yesterday; then I sent him hither to assist you, and now the scoundrel has left me again.

Jen. 'Tis the luxury of the times, sir; though we are poor we have good tastes, and can be out of the way now and then, as well as our betters.

Bel. How this villain has used me! But we must lose no time; I'll fetch the letter, and be back in an instant. [*Exit.*

Jen. Let me see—can't I strike some mischief out of this intelligence! I warrant me—I can delay the marriage at least. Here's my master; I'll try my skill upon him. If I don't quite bring him about, I'll set his brains in such a ferment, they shan't settle in haste again.

Enter STOCKWELL.

Stock. I think I saw a glimpse of young Belford, but now—what business has he here?

Jen. Business enough, sir; the best friend you have, that's all. He has been telling me a piece of news that will surprise you.

Stock. Let's hear this piece of news?

Jen. O' my word, a bold man, this Mr Harlow, to take two wives at once, when most folk we see have enough of one!

Stock. Two wives! bless us, what do you mean?

Jen. Why, the poor man's married already, sir, that's all.

Stock. Married!

Jen. Married, I say, to a young lady in the country, and very near marrying another in town—a new fashion, I suppose.

Stock. Pooh, pooh! the thing's impossible, I tell you.

Jen. That may be, but so it is. He has writ to Belford, who is his friend.

Stock. All romance and invention!

Jen. All truth, I say; Belford is gone to fetch the letter, and he'll convince you.

Stock. I will never be convinced that——

Jen. Why not, sir? the young fellows of this age are capable of any thing.

Stock. Very true, Jenny; they are abominable!

Jen. And, for aught we know, this Mr Harlowe here may be one of those gentlemen, that make no scruple of a plurality of wives, provided they bring a plurality of portions. But by your leave, good sir, as this young lady, (she in the country, I mean) has the first and best title, we must look a little about us for the sake of our young lady in town.

Stock. Very true—'tis worth attending to.

Jen. Attending to! if I were you, sir, before I delivered up my daughter, I should insist upon the affair's being cleared up to my satisfaction.

Stock. You're in the right, Jenny; here's his man; I'll sound him about his master's marriage, and then—leave us together—Go—I'll make him speak, I warrant you!

Jen. If this marriage is but confirmed, I shall leap out of my skin. [*Exit.*

Enter SLIP.

Stock. Mr Slip, come hither. My old friend sir Harry has recommended you to me, and I like your physiognomy; you have an honest face: it pleases me much.

Slip. Your humble servant, sir. That's your goodness; but if I was no honester than my face, gad a mercy poor me!

Stock. Well, well—hark you me! this master of yours is a lad of spirit—a favourite of the ladies, I warrant him, ha?

Slip. That he is, I can tell you, sir; a pretty fellow; no woman can resist him. I'll warrant, this marriage in your family will set you the hearts of thirty families at ease all round the country.

Stock. Odd! a terrible man, I profess. I don't wonder now that one wife can't serve him.

Slip. Wife, sir! what wife, sir?

Stock. You see I know all, my friend; so you may as well confess.

Slip. Confess! what, sir?

Stock. I know all the conspiracy; and will take care that you, rascal, shall have your desert as an accomplice.

Slip. Accomplice!—Rascal! and a conspiracy!—Let me die if I comprehend a word you say!

Stock. But I'll make you, villain!

Slip. O very well, sir—ha, ha, ha!—I protest you half frightened me—Very well, indeed!—Ha, ha, ha!

Stock. Do you laugh at me, sirrah?

Slip. If I had not remembered to have heard my old master say, what a dry joker you were, I protest I should have been taken in. Very good indeed, ha, ha, ha!

Stock. None of your buffoonery, sirrah; but confess the whole affair this minute, or be sent to Newgate the next.

Slip. Newgate! sure, sir, that would be carrying the joke too far.

Stock. You won't confess, then?—Who waits there? Send for a constable this moment.

Slip. Nay, good sir, no noise, I beseech you. Though I am innocent as the child unborn, yet that severe tone of voice is apt to disconcert one. What was it your honour was pleased to hint about my master's being married? Who could possibly invent such a fib as that?

Stock. No fib, sirrah! he wrote it himself to a friend of his at London—to Belford.

Slip. Oh, oh! your humble servant, Mr Belford! a fine fetch, i'faith! nay, I can't blame the man neither, ha, ha! Pray, sir, is not this same Mr Belford in love with your daughter?

Stock. Suppose he is, puppy! and what then?

Slip. Why then, Jenny is his friend, and at the bottom of all his fetches; I'll lay a wager that she is author of this whopper.

Stock. Um!

Slip. Our arrival put them to their trumps—and then—Slap, my poor master must be married; and Belford must shew a forged letter, forsooth, under his own hand to prove it—and, and, and, you understand me, sir——

Stock. Why, this has a face.

Slip. A face! ay, like a full moon; and while you're upon a false scent after this story, Jenny will gain time to work upon your daughter. I heard her say myself that she could lead you by the nose.

Stock. Oh, she could, could she? Well, well, we'll see that.

Slip. By the by, sir, where did you meet with this Mrs Jenny?

Stock. How should I know! I believe my wife hired her half a year ago out of the country. She had a good character—and is very notable—but pert, very pert!

Slip. Yes, yes, she is notable—Out of the country! and a good character! well said, Mrs Jenny!

[*Half aside.*

Stock. What's the matter, Slip? You have something in your head, I'm sure.

Slip. No, nothing at all—but the luck of some people!—out of the country!

Stock. You must tell me. I shan't think you mean me well, if you conceal any thing from me.

Slip. Why, among ourselves, sir—I knew Mrs Jenny the last year very well—born and bred in Covent Garden. Some time ago bar-maid to a jelly-house, and two children, (very fine ones indeed) by little Tom the waiter. I knew, when I saw her here, that we should have some sport.

Stock. Ay, ay! I know enough; well said, Mrs Jenny, indeed! But mind the cunning of this fellow, this Belford—he says he's the most intimate friend your master has!

Slip. Ay, sir? ha, ha, ha! and I dare say my master would not know him if he met him—— however, that's well observed, sir; um! nothing escapes you.

Stock. Why, I am seldom out, seldom———

Slip. Never.

Stock. I don't say never; but here is your master, I must have a laugh with him about his marriage; ha, ha, ha!

Slip. 'Twill be rare sport for him; he, he, he!

Enter MARTIN.

Stock. So, son-in-law! Do you hear what the world say of you! I have had intelligence here, (ay, and certain intelligence too) that you are married, it seems—privately married, to a young lady of Dorsetshire. What say you, sir? Is not this fine? Ha, ha, ha!

Slip. Very merry, faith!

[*Laughing, and making signs to* MAR.

Mar. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis such a joke! What, you have heard so? This Mr World is a facetious gentleman!

Stock. Another man, now, would have given plumb into this foolish story, but I——No, no; your humble servant for that.

Slip. No, plague! Mr Stockwell has a long head! He——

[*Pointing still.*

Mar. I would fain know who could be the author of such a ridiculous story?

Slip. Mr Stockwell tells me, 'tis one Belford, I think he calls him; is not that his name, sir?

Mar. Belford! Belford! I never heard of his name in my life.

Slip. As I said, sir; you see master knows nothing of the fellow. Stay, stay; is it not the youngster that—you know whom I mean? that, that——

Mar. Rot me, if I do!

Slip. He that—you must know him—that is your rival here, as the report goes?

Mar. O ay! now I recollect. By the same token, they said he had but little, and owed much. That this match was to wipe off old scores, and that his creditors had stopped proceedings till he's married.

Stock. Ay, ay! there let them stop. Ha, ha, ha! they'll be tired of stopping, I believe, if they are to stop till he has married my daughter, ha, ha, ha!

Slip. He's no fool, let me tell you, this Mr Belford.

Stock. No; nor Mr Stockwell neither: and to convince them of that, I will go this instant to my banker's, and——

Mar. Sir, I'll wait on you.

Stock. Stay, son-in-law; I have a proposal to make—I own, I agreed with my old friend to give you 10,000l. down.

Mar. Ay, down was the word, sir—it was so—down.

Stock. Now, could you conveniently take some houses, that I have in the borough, instead of half that sum? They are worth a great deal more than that, I assure you.

Mar. O dear sir, your word is not to be disputed: I'll take any thing—but, between friends, ready money is the truth. Down, you know, sir; that was the word, down.

Slip. Species, your honour knows, is of easier conveyance.

Stock. Yes, sure, that's true; but——

Mar. Ay, ay; one can't put houses in one's portmanteau, you know—he, he, he! Besides, there is a pretty estate to be sold in Dorsetshire, near my father's, and I have my eye upon that.

Slip. As pretty a conditioned thing, as any in the country; and then so contagious, that a hedge only parts them.

Mar. I may have it for 9000l., and I'm told 'tis worth ten at least.

Slip. The least penny, sir: the timber's worth half the money.

Stock. Well, well; look you, son, I have a round 10,000l. now in my banker's hands, which I thought to have made immediate advantage of. You shall have a moiety of it.

Mar. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you. Are you going to your banker's now, sir?

Stock. I will but step and let my wife know of it; fetch the cash directly: and you shall marry my daughter in an hour.

Mar. Sir, suppose we invite Mr Belford to the wedding? Ha, ha, ha!

Slip. Ha, ha, ha! What a droll devil my master is!

Stock. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit* STOCK.

Mar. Wind and tide, my boy! My master has certainly had an interview with Miss Nancy Stockwell?

Slip. And as certainly knows Harlowe, too.

Mar. They correspond, you see?

Slip. But, thanks to my wit, I have so set the old man against Belford, that I am in hopes we shall pack up madam's fortune in the portmanteau, before he's set to rights again; and—

[MAR. *going, stops.*

Mar. Zounds! my master!

Slip. Where?

Mar. Don't you see him reading a letter?

Slip. This is my unlucky star! What will become of us?

Enter BELFORD.

Bel. This letter gets me admittance to Miss Stockwell at least: and if I can but save her from ruin, I shall be happy; but I hope this may have better consequences. Ha! What's this? 'Tis he! 'Tis Martin, as I live!

Mar. Ay, 'tis I: and well for you it is. What do you here?

Bel. Nay, what are you doing here, and what have you done here? What clothes are these? What's your scheme? And why have I not known it?

Mar. Not so fast and so loud, good master of mine—walls have ears. These are your rival's clothes, who is to follow them in a few days: but his servant, there, is an old friend of mine, and so, as they fit me so well—he's—I pass upon the family for the young fellow himself.

Bel. Well, and where's the joke of that?

Mar. A very good joke, I think. I'll undertake to put these two old fools (your papa and mamma that shall be) so out of conceit with their son-in-law, that—why, already I have heard the old folks agreeing, that you were much the properer match for their daughter; so that I expect every moment they'll send for you to deliver them from me: and nothing can prevent our success, but your being——

Bel. Ha, ha, ha! a very good stratagem: but there is no need of it now; for this rival, as you call him, is my particular friend, and married to another woman: so I tell you we have nothing to fear.

Mar. But I tell you, you will knock us all to pieces. The finest plot that ever was laid, and you'll spoil it in the hatching.

Bel. But what occasion is there? He can't marry them both.

Mar. Speak lower! You think yourself mighty wise now; but here's Harlowe's servant, whom I have tickled in the palm, will tell you another story.

Bel. Why, here's a letter under his own hand. Read it.

Mar. [*Reading.*]—Um, um! 'Some days pri-'vately married'—Slip——

[*Aside to* SLIP.

Slip. This is easily cleared up, sir! There was such a thing proposed by my young master; but you must understand, sir, that Mr Harlowe, not approving of the terms, has tipped the young woman's father a good round sum, and so the affair is made up.

Bel. Can it be possible that he is not married!

Slip. I'll take my oath of it before any magistrate in England.

Mar. Pooh! married! what! his old boots?

Bel. Well, I'll decamp, then: but why is not Jenny in your plot?

Mar. She! no, no; she is not to be trusted. I soon found out that. Tooth and nail against us.

Bel. Good Heavens! How have I been deceived!

Mar. You have indeed, master: but we have no time for reflections. If Jenny should see you, we are undone.

Bel. Well, well, I go. I'll make both your fortunes if you succeed.

Mar. Succeed! nothing can prevent us, but your being seen.

Bel. I'll away, then.

Mar. And come not near this house to-day. If you do, I must decamp.

Bel. Well; but, my dear lads, take care! I depend on you.

Slip. That's all you have to do; put your fortune into our hands.

Mar. And I'll warrant, we give a good account of it.

Bel. Think how my happiness——

Mar. Prithee, no more.

Bel. Depends on you!

Mar. Begone, I say, or I'll throw up the cards!

[*Exit* BEL.

Slip. At last he's gone!

Mar. And we have time to take a little breath; for this was a hot alarm, faith!

Slip. I was only afraid the old gentleman, or Jenny, would have surprised us together.

Mar. That would have been a clincher! but now I must after the old gentleman for the money. [*Exit.*

Slip. And I'll be upon the watch, for fear of mischief. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An apartment in* STOCKWELL'S *house.*

Enter STOCKWELL *and* JENNY.

Jen. Still I say, sir——

Stock. And still I say, madam——

Jen. That Mr Belford's a very honest gentleman, and you ought to search it.

Stock. I tell you, I have searched, and probed it to the quick—and that he shall feel. I know well enough you are in his interest, and have your interest in so doing; and I'm sorry you could find no prettier plot than this to defer the wedding.

Jen. Lud, sir, do you believe—

Stock. No; but I'm sure on't, that's better.

Jen. Lud! you'd make one mad.

Stock. And you'd make me a fool, if you could. No, no; I'm an ass, a poor simpleton, that may be led by the nose! but you may tell my daughter, that she shall marry Harlowe this night. And you may tell your friend, Belford, to let his creditors know that they need not stop proceedings. And you, madam, may return to your jelly-shop, and give my compliments to little Tom, and all the little family, ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit* STOCK.

Jen. What does he mean by the jelly-house—little Tom——and all the little family? There's something at the bottom of this, I cannot yet fathom: but I will fathom it. I was never out of a secret yet, that I had a mind to find out—and that's all that have come across me—and my pride won't let me be long out of this. I will go directly to Mr Belford's, where we'll lay our heads together, and beget such a piece of mischief, that shall be hard for the devil himself, if he has the impudence to try confusions with me.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*The street before* STOCKWELL'S *house.*

Enter STOCKWELL, MARTIN, *and* SLIP.

Stock. Come, son-in-law, we'll go to my banker's, and see how our cash stands, and settle matters as well as we can.

Mar. I'll attend you, sir, with pleasure—cash, or notes, all the same to me.

Stock. I wish you would take the houses, son-in-law; 'twould be more convenient for me, and a greater advantage to you!

Mar. Advantage, sir! I scorn to take any advantage of you—I hate mean views. I desire nothing better than my bargain. The money and your daughter's charms are sufficient for your poor Mart——humble servant.

Stock. Well, well, come along; we don't quite understand one another.

[*Exit.*

Mar. But we do. [*To* SLIP.] The day's our own; get every thing ready to make our retreat good.

Slip. Ay, ay, get you the money, and I'll be ready with the equipage. [*Exit* MARTIN.

'Thus far our arms have with success been crowned:'

I have only one doubt remaining, and that's about this same portion. I don't relish this dividing a booty. How shall I cheat Martin? I should deserve to be canonized, could I but cheat that rogue of rogues. I must e'en throw the young lady in his way, and persuade him, for our better security, to pass the night with her; so leave him with the shell, while I slip off with the kernel. A tempting bait! But, no—stand off, Satan! 'Tis against our fundamental laws.—We adventurers have ten times the honour of your fair traders. [*Going, and stops.*] Why, what! Sure it can't be! Zounds, if it should! It is the very man! Our little, old, withered, fiery gentleman, by all that's terrible! from what a fine dream will this gouty spitfire awake us!—He's certainly going to Mr Stockwell's, and his gun-powder will blow up all at once! If Martin and Mr Stockwell don't return too soon from the banker's, I may send him away; 'tis our last stake, and I must play it like a gamester.

Enter SIR HARRY HARLOWE.

Sir Har. I don't know how my old friend Stockwell may receive me after this disappointment.

Slip. Stay till you see Mr Stockwell, my old friend. [*Aside.*] Bless me, what do I see! Sir Harry, is it you? Indeed, your honour? Your very humble servant!

Sir Har. I don't know you, friend; keep your distance.

[*Claps his hands on his pockets.*

Slip. Don't you know me, sir?

Sir Har. It cannot be Slip, sure! Is this the fool's coat my son ordered you for his wedding?

Slip. Yes, sir; and a genteel thing it is upon me. What, you had a mind to surprise your r iends? Who thought of you at London, sir?

Sir Har. I set out soon after you, lame as I was. I bethought me, it looked better to settle matters of such consequence with Mr Stockwell viva voce, than to trust it to a servant.

Slip. You were always a nice observer of decorums: you are going now to Mr Stockwell's?

Sir Har. Directly. [*Going to knock.*

Slip. Hold your desperate hand! and thank Fortune that brought me hither for your rescue.

Sir Har. Why, what's the matter? Rescue me, quoth-a! Have you seen them, Slip?

Slip. Seen them! ay, and felt them, too. I am just escaped. The old lady is in a damned passion with you, I can tell you.

Sir Har. With me!

Slip. Ay, that she is. How, says she, does the old fool think to fob us off with a flam and a sham of a dirty trollop? Must my daughter's reputation—and, then, she bridled and stalked up to me thus, sir.

Sir Har. How! but there's no answering a silly woman: how can this affect her daughter's character?

Slip. That's what I said. Madam, says I—— but you can't expect a woman in a fury to hear reason: 'tis almost as much as they can do, when they are cool. No, no; as for her argument, it was sad stuff! Will the world, says she, believe such a———no, no; they'll think the old hunks has found some flaw in our circumstances, and so won't stand to his bargain.

Sir Har. Poh! Nothing disguises a woman like passion. Though it may become a man sometimes——

Slip. Lud, sir! you would not know her again—her eyes stare in her head, and she can't see a creature. On a sudden, (for I pushed the argument pretty home) she caught hold of my throat, thus, sir; and knocked me down with the butt end of her fan.

Sir Har. Did she? But what did her husband say to this? Let us hear that.

Slip. Oh, sir, I found him pretty reasonable! He only shewed me the door, and kicked me down stairs.

Sir Har. If he's for that work, we can kick, too.

Slip. Dear sir, consider your gout.

Sir Har. No, sir! when my blood is up, I never feel the gout. But could they possibly take it amiss, that I consented to my son's marriage? I doubt you did not explain circumstances.

Slip. I told them plain enough; I thought that my young master, having begun the ceremony at the wrong end, the family were going ding-dong to law; and that you had behaved like a man of honour, and———very wisely compounded matters.

Sir Har. And did not this convince them?

Slip. I say convince! They are in a pretty temper to be convinced! If you would take a fool's counsel, you should return to your inn, and never think of convincing them.

Sir Har. They are for kicking, are they? I could have kicked pretty well myself once. We shall see what they would be at——

[*Going, is stopt by* SLIP.

Slip. Indeed, sir, you shall not. What! have your face scratched by an old woman, or be run through the body with a rusty sword? Indeed you shall not.

Sir Har. [*Endeavouring to draw his sword.*] We have swords, that run through bodies, as well as they; ay, and pistols, too! If he will quarrel, I'm his man. Steel or lead, 'tis all one to me. A passionate old fool! I'll cool him; kick me down stairs!

Slip. Lord, sir! you are so hot! You forget; it was me he kicked down stairs, not you!

Sir Har. 'Tis the same thing, sir. Whoever kicks you, kicks me by proxy—nay, worse; you have only the kicks, but I have the affront——

Slip. If the kicks are the best, I shall be content with the worst another time. Undone, undone! This way, this way, sir. Let us go this way———there will certainly be bloodshed.

Sir Har. What is the matter, you fool? What art afraid of?

Slip. Don't you see Mr Stockwell coming this way? Bless me, how he stares! He's mad with passion. Don't meet him, sir Harry. You are out of wind, and have not pushed a great while, and he'll certainly be too much for you—

Sir Har. I won't avoid him. My blood's up as well as his; if the fool will be for fighting—— let him take what follows. Hold my cane, Slip.

[*Cocks his hat.*

Slip. Ay, 'tis all over.—If Martin has but got the money, we may retire while the champions are at it.

Enter OLD STOCKWELL *and* MARTIN—STOCKWELL *with a bag and notes in his hand.*

Stock. We will count our money and bills over again, sign the writings, and then, son, for singing and dancing, and——

Mar. Don't give yourself that trouble, Mr Stockwell; among friends, you know——pray, let me ease you of that weight.

[*Offers to take the money.*

Stock. No, no, son; you shan't have a farthing more or less than your bargain. We citizens are exact, and must have our way, in form.

Slip. Zounds! he has not got the money! We must have a scramble for it at last, then!

Sir Har. Now he eyes me! I'll be as fierce as he; now for it——hem, hem!

[*Bustles up.*

[*During this,* MARTIN *and* SLIP *make signs, and approach each other by degrees.*]

Stock. Eh! sure, if my eyes don't deceive me, there is somebody very like my old friend and your father, sir Harry Harlowe!

Slip. Damnably like, indeed, sir!

Sir Har. He looks like the devil at me; but I'll be even with him.

Stock. What, my dear friend, is it you?

Sir Har. None of your hypocritical palavers with me! Keep your distance, you dissembling old fool you, or I'll teach you better manners, than to kick my servant down stairs.

Stock. What do you mean, sir Harry?—He's mad sure!

[*They stand and stare at each other, and* SIR HARRY *shakes his sword.*

Mar. Nothing can save us now, Slip!

Slip. Trip up his heels, and fly with the money to the post-chaise; while I tread upon my old master's toes, that he mayn't follow us.

Mar. We have nothing else for it—Have at them!

Stock. Nay, but sir Harry!

[*As they approach the old gentleman,* BELFORD *comes in behind with constables, and seizes them.*]

Bel. Have I caught you, rascals!—in the very nick too! Secure them, constables.

Stock. What, in the name of wonder, are you about?

Bel. I have a double pleasure in this; for I have not only discovered two villains, but at the very time, sir, their villainy was taking effect to make you miserable.

Sir Har. Two villains! Mr Stockwell, do you hear this? Explain yourself, sir; or blood and brimstone———

Stock. Explain, Mr Belford!—Sir Harry Harlowe! What is all this!——I am all stupefaction!——

Bel. Is this sir Harry? I am your humble servant, sir. I have not the honour to be known to you, but am a particular acquaintance of your son's; who has been misrepresented here, by that pretty gentleman, once a rascal of mine.

Sir Har. I'm in a wood, and don't know how to get out of it!

Stock. Is not this your son, sir Harry?

Sir Har. No, you passionate old fool! but this is my servant, and my son's pimp, whom I understand you have been kicking down stairs!

Stock. Here's a fine heap of roguery!

Bel. It was my good fortune, by the intelligence and instigation of Mrs Jenny, to discover the whole before these wretches had accomplished their designs.

Stock. What a hair-breadth 'scape have I had! as the poet says, the very brink of destruction! for I should have given him the cash in five minutes. I'm in a cold sweat at the thoughts of it! Dear Mr Belford!

[*Shakes him by the hand.*

Enter MRS STOCKWELL, MISS, *and* JENNY.

Mrs Stock. O, Mr Stockwell! here are fine doings going forward. Did not I tell you, that I was for Mr Belford from the beginning?

Stock. Don't trouble us now, wife; you have been for and against him twenty times in four and twenty hours.

Jen. [*To* MARTIN *and* SLIP.] Your humble servant, gentlemen! What, dumb and ashamed too!——the next scheme you go about, take care that there is not such a girl as I within twenty miles of you.

Mar. I wish we were twenty miles from you, with all my soul!

Slip. As you don't like our company, madam, we'll retire. [*Going away.*]

Bel. Hold them fast, constables: They must give some account of themselves at the Old Bailey, and then perhaps they may retire to our plantations.

Sir Har. But what have they done? or what will you do? or what am I to do? I'm all in the dark—pitch dark——

Stock. Is your son married, sir Harry?

Sir Har. Yes, a fortnight ago: and this fellow you kicked down stairs, was sent with my excuses.

Stock. I kicked him down stairs! You villain you——

Bel. Don't disturb yourself with what is past, but rejoice at your deliverance. If you and sir Harry will permit me to attend you within, I will acquaint you with the whole business.

Sir Har. I see the whole business now, sir. We have been their fools.

Stock. And they are our knaves, and shall suffer as such. Thanks to Mr Belford here—my good angel, that has saved my 10,000l.!

Sir Har. He has saved your family, Mr Stockwell.

Bel. Could you but think, sir, my good services to your family might intitle me to be one of it!

Miss Nan. You'd make your daughter happy, by giving her to your best friend.

Mrs Stock. My dear; for once hear me and reason, and make them both happy.

Stock. You shall be happy, Belford. Take my daughter's hand. You have her heart. You have deserved her fortune, and shall have that, too. Come, let us go in and examine these culprits.

Sir Har. Right, Mr Stockwell. 'Tis a good thing to punish villainy; but 'tis a better to make virtue happy: and so let us about it.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

A PEEP BEHIND THE CURTAIN;

OR,

THE NEW REHEARSAL.

BY

GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

SIR TOBY FUZ, SIR MACARONI VIRTU, } *Theatrical amateurs.*
GLIB, *the author.*
WILSON, *attached to* MISS FUZ.
MERVIN, *his friend.*
PATENT, *the manager.*
HOPKINS, *prompter.*
SAUNDERS, *carpenter.*
JOHNSTON, *housekeeper.*

WOMEN.

LADY FUZ, MISS FUZ, } *Wife and daughter to* SIR TOBY.
First Sweeper.
Second Sweeper.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ TO ORPHEUS.

ORPHEUS,
Old Shepherd.
Chorus of Shepherds.
RHODOPE.

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Covent Garden.*

Enter WILSON *and* MERVIN, *booted.*

Wil. MY dear Jack, ten thousand thanks for your punctuality—ready equipped, I see, to serve your friend.

Mer. But how can I serve you, my young Don Quixotte? Am I to be your Sancho, while your knight errantship is running away with this Dulcinea del Toboso?

Wil. I have given orders, that my post-chaise shall wait in the broad way by Exeter 'Change, and the moment the lady steps from her chair to the chaise, the postilions will crack their whips, and drive away like lightning.

Mer. You are a romantic fellow! How can you possibly imagine, that your hot-headed scheme to run away with this young lady can ever be executed?

Wil. From the justice of my cause, Jack.

Mer. Justice! Make that out, and my conscience will be easy.

Wil. Did not her father's uncle, who was a good lawyer, and cheated my father of three-fourths of his fortune, leave her near thirty thousand pounds? Now, this is my reasoning—Sir Toby's uncle ran away with some thousands from my father, I shall run away with sir Toby's daughter; this will bring the said thousands back to me again, with which I'll pay off old scores,

strike a balance in my favour, and get a good wife into the bargain. There's justice for you!

Mer. Aye, justice with a vengeance! But why must sir Toby be punished for the sins of his uncle?

Wil. I'll ease your conscience there, too: My mother, at my father's death, took me, a boy, to sir Toby and my lady, to solicit their kindness for me—He gave me half-a-crown to buy gingerbread; and her ladyship, who was combing a fat lap-dog, muttered, 'There was no end of maintaining poor relations.'

Mer. I have not a qualm left—But did you really pass for a strolling player last summer, to have a pretence of being near her father's house?

Wil. Yes, I did, and, as Polonius says, was accounted a good actor.

Mer. What could put that unaccountable frolic in your head?

Wil. To gain the favour of sir Toby's family, as a strolling player, which I could not as a poor relation. They are fond of acting to madness, and my plan succeeded; I was so altered they did not know me; they liked me much, came to a benefit which I pretended to have, invited me to their house, and Miss met me privately, after I had played Ranger and Lothario.

Mer. Aye, aye, when a young lady's head is crammed with combustible scraps of plays, she is always ready primed, and will go off (if you will allow me a pun) the very first opportunity.

Wil. I discovered myself to the young lady, and her generosity was so great, that she resolved to marry me to make me amends; there are refined feelings for you!

Mer. Aye, double refined!—she is more romantic than you, Will—But did not you run a great risque of losing her, when she knew you was only a gentleman, and not a player?

Wil. Read that letter, and tell me if my castles are built in the air? [*Gives a letter.*

Mer. '[*Reads.*] I shall be with my papa and 'mamma to see a rehearsal at Drury-Lane Play-'house on Tuesday morning; if my present incli-'nations hold, and my heart does not fail me, I may 'convince honest Ranger, what confidence I have in 'his honour.—Postscript.—If I don't see you 'then, I don't know when I shall see you, for 'we return into the country next week.'

Wil. Well, what think you?

Mer. O she'll run away with you most certainly—

Wil. I must not lose time then. [*Looking at his watch.*] I must go and take my stand, that the deer may not escape me.

Mer. And I'll go and take mine, to help you to carry off the ven'son—This is very like poaching, Will—But how will you get admittance into Drury-Lane Theatre?

Wil. I was very near being disappointed there; for unluckily the acting manager, who scarce reached to my third button, cocked up his head in my face, and said I was much too tall for a hero—however, I got the liberty of the scenes, by desiring to rehearse Hamlet next week—But I hope to cross the Tweed with the fair Ophelia before that time, and finish my stage adventures by appearing the first time in the character of a good husband.

Mer. Success attend you!

Wil. This is the day,
'Makes me, or mars, for ever and for aye!'—
If I succeed, I shall be restored to my father's estate, drink claret, and live like a gentleman with the wife of my heart; and, egad, for aught I know, stand for the county.

Mer. If not, you must be confined to your little one hundred and twenty pounds a year farm, make your own cheese, marry the curate's daughter, have a dozen children, and brew the best October in the parish.

Wil. Which ever way fortune will dispose of me, I shall be always happy to see my friends, and never shall forget my obligations to thee, my dear Jack. [*Shakes him by the hand.*

Mer. Well, well; let us away—we have too much business to mind compliments.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*The Play-house. Two women sweeping the stage.*

1*st Wom.* Come, Betty; dust away, dust away, girl; the managers will be here presently; there's no lying in bed for them now, we are up early and late; all hurry and bustle from morning to night; I wonder what the deuce they have got into their heads?

2*d Wom.* Why to get money, Mrs Besom, to be sure; the folks say about us, that the other house will make them stir their stumps, and they'll make us stir ours: If they are in motion, we must not stand still, Mrs Besom.

1*st Wom.* Ay, ay, girl, they have met with their match, and we shall all suffer for it; for my part I can't go through the work, if they are always in this plaguy hurry; I have not drank a comfortable dish of tea, since the house opened.

2*d Wom.* One had better die than be scolded and hurried about as we are by the housekeeper; he takes us all for a parcel of negers, I believe: pray, give us a pinch of your snuff, Mrs Besom.

[*They lean upon their brooms, and take snuff.*

1*st Wom.* Between you and I, Betty, and our two brooms, the house-keeper is grown a little purse-proud; he thinks himself a great actor forsooth, since he played the Scotch fellow, and the fat cook in queen Mab.

2*d Wom.* The quality spoils him, too: why, woman, he talks to them for all the world as if he was a lord!

1*st Wom.* I shall certainly resign, as the great

folks call it in the newspaper, if they won't promise to give me the first dresser's place that falls, and make our little Tommy a page; what, woman! though we are well paid for our work, we ought to make sure of something when our brooms are taken from us—'tis the fashion, Betty.

2d Wom. Right, right, Mrs Besom; service is no inheritance, and to be always doing dirty work, and to have no prospect to rest, and clean ourselves, is the curse only of us poor folks.

1st Wom. You and I will drink a dish of tea together in comfort this afternoon, and talk over these and other matters—but mum—here's the prompter. [*They sing, and sweep again.*

Enter HOPKINS.

Hop. Come, come, away with your brooms, and clear the stage; the managers will be here directly. [*The sweepers hurry off.*] Where are the carpenters?—Carpenters!

A Carpenter above.

Car. What do you want, Mr Hopkins?

Hop. What do I want? Come down, and set the scenes for the new Burletta of Orpheus.

Car. We an't ready for it; the beasts are now in hand—they an't finished.

Hop. Not finished the beasts! here's fine work! the managers and author will be here directly, and nothing ready——fie, fie, fie!—— Saunders!——Saunders!—— [*Calls out.*

Enter SAUNDERS.

Saun. Here! here!—Zooks, what a bawling you make! do keep your breath for your prompting, Master Hopkins, and send it not after me at this rate—I'm not deaf!

Hop. But your men are, and asleep too, I believe; I can't get a soul of them near me; 'tis ten o'clock, [*Looking at his Watch.*] and not a scene prepared for the rehearsal; 'tis I shall be blamed, and not you.

Saun. Blamed for what! 'Tis but a rehearsal, and of one act only—would you have us to finish our work, before the poet has done his? Don't you know, that carpenters are always the last in a house? and yet you want us to get out of it, before the author has covered in!

Hop. You may be as witty as you please; but the managers will do as they please, and they have promised the author to rehearse the first act of his Burletta of Orpheus this morning, as he pleases, with all the proper scenes, dresses, machinery, and music; so, what signifies all our prating?

Saun. Very little, as you say—but damn all these new vagaries, that put us all upon our heads topsy versy!—my men have sat up all night, and I have finished every thing but the Dancing Cows.

Hop. Bless my heart, man, the author depends most upon his cows!

Saun. His cows! how came they to be his? they are my cows; these poets are pretty fellows, faith! they say I'll have a flying devil, or a dancing bear, or any such conundrum; why 'tis easily said, but who is to make them fly, and dance? ha, Master Prompter? Why poor Pill Garlic—the audience applauds, the author is conceited; but the carpenter is never thought of.

Hop. These are bold truths, Mr Saunders.

Saun. Why, then, out with them, I say—great men spin the brains of the little ones, and take the credit of them. Do you know how I was served in our dramatic romance of Cymon?

Hop. You did your business well there, particularly in the last scene.

Saun. And what was the consequence? One fine gentleman in the boxes said, my master brought it from Italy—'No, damn it (says another, taking snuff) I saw the very same thing at Paris;' when you all know, here behind the scenes, that the whole design came from this head; and the execution from these hands—but nothing can be done by an Englishman now a days; and so your servant, Mr Hopkins. [*Going.*

Hop. Hark'e, Saunders? the managers have ordered me to discharge the man at the lightning; he was so drunk the last time he flashed, that he has singed all the clouds on that side the stage. [*Pointing to the clouds.*

Saun. Yes, yes, I see it; and hark'e? he has burnt a hole in the new cascade, and set fire to the shower of rain—but mum—

Hop. The deuce! he must be discharged directly. [*Exit* SAUNDERS.

Pat. [*Without.*] Where's the prompter?

Hop. Here I am, sir.

Enter PATENT.

Pat. Make haste with your scenes, Saunders; so, clear the stage, Mr Hopkins, and let us go to business. Is the extraordinary author of this very extraordinary performance come yet?

Hop. Not yet, sir, but we shall be soon ready for him. 'Tis a very extraordinary thing indeed, to rehearse only one act of a performance, and with dresses and decorations, as if it were really before an audience.

Pat. It is a novelty, indeed, and a little expensive too, but we could not withstand the solicitations, that were made to us; we shan't often repeat the same experiment.

Hop. I hope not, sir; 'tis a very troublesome one, and the performers murmur greatly at it.

Pat. When do the performers not murmur, Mr Hopkins? Has any morning passed in your time without some grievance or another?

Hop. I have half a dozen now in my pocket for you. [*Feeling in his pocket for papers.*

Pat. O, pray, let's have them! my old breakfast—[*Prompter gives them.*]—And the old story—Actresses quarrelling about parts; there's not one of them but thinks herself young enough for any part; and not a young one but thinks herself capable of any part! But their betters quarrel about what they are not fit for; so our ladies have, at least, great precedents for their folly.

Hop. The young fellow from Edinburgh won't accept of the second lord; he desires to have the first.

Pat. I don't doubt it—Well, well, if the author can make him speak English, I have no objection.

Hop. Mr Rantly is indisposed, and can't play to-morrow.

Pat. Well, well, let his lungs rest a little; they want it, I'm sure. What a campaign shall we make of it! all our subalterns will be general officers; and our generals will only fight when they please.

Glib. [*Without.*] O he's upon the stage, is he? I'll go to him——

Pat. Here comes the author; do you prepare the people for the rehearsal; desire them to be as careful, as if they were to perform before an audience.

Hop. I will, sir—Pray let us know when we must begin. [*Exit.*

Enter GLIB.

Glib. Dear Mr Patent, am not I too late? Do make me happy at once; I have been upon the rack this half hour—But the ladies, Mr Patent, the ladies——

Pat. But where are the ladies, sir?

Glib. They'll be here in the drinking of a cup of tea; I left them all at breakfast; lady Fuz can't stir from home without some refreshment. Sir Macaroni Virtu was not come when I left them; he generally sits up all night, and if he gets up before two o'clock, he only walks in his sleep all the rest of the day—He is perhaps the most accomplished connoisseur in the three kingdoms; yet he is never properly awake till other people go to bed; however, if he should come, our little performance, I believe, will rouse him, ha, ha, ha! you understand me? A pinch of cephalic only.

Pat. I have the honour of knowing him a little—Will sir Macaroni be here?

Glib. Why he promised, but he's too polite to be punctual—You understand me? ha, ha, ha!—however, I am pretty sure we shall see him—I have a secret for you—not a soul must know it—he has composed two of the songs in my burletta—An admirable musician, but particular—He has no great opinion of me, nor indeed of any body else; a very tolerable one of himself—and so I believe he'll come—You understand me—ha, ha, ha!

Pat. I do, sir—But, pray, Mr Glib, why did not you complete your burletta—'tis very new with us to rehearse but one act only?

Glib. By a sample, Mr Patent, you may know the piece: if you approve, you shall never want novelty; I am a very spider at spinning my own brains, ha, ha, ha! always at it, spin, spin, spin—you understand me?

Pat. Extremely well—In your second act, I suppose, you intend to bring Orpheus into hell?

Glib. O yes, I make him play the devil there; I send him for some better purpose than to fetch his wife, ha, ha, ha! Don't mistake me—while he is upon earth, I make him a very good sort of a man—He keeps a mistress, indeed, but his wife's dead, you know; and, were she alive, not much harm in that, for I make him a man of fashion—Fashion, you know, is all in all—You understand me? Upon a qualm of conscience, he quits his mistress, and sets out for hell, with a resolution to fetch his wife——

Pat. Is that, too, like a man of fashion, Mr Glib?

Glib. No, that's the moral part of him—He's a mixed character—but, as he approaches and gets into the infernal regions, his principles melt away by degrees, as it were, by the heat of the climate; and finding that his wife, Eurydice, is kept by Pluto, he immediately makes up to Proserpine, and is kept by her; then they all four agree matters amicably—Change partners, as one may say, make a genteel partie quarree, and finish the whole with a song and a chorus—and a stinger it is—The subject of the song is, the old proverb, "exchange is no robbery," and the chorus runs thus——

> We care not or know,
> In matters of love,
> What is doing above,
> But this, this is the fashion below.

I believe that's true satire, Mr Patent; strong and poignant; you understand me?

Pat. O very well! 'tis Chian pepper indeed; a little will go a great way.

Glib. I make Orpheus see, in my hell, all sorts of people, of all degrees, and occupations; sly, and of both sexes—that's not very unnatural, I believe—there shall be very good company, too, I assure you; high life below stairs, as I call it, ha, ha, ha! you take me—a double edge—no boy's-play—rip and tear—the times require it—fortè, fortissimè——

Pat. Won't it be too fortè? Take care, Mr Glib, not to make it so much above proof, that the boxes can't taste it. Take care of empty boxes!

Glib. Empty boxes! I'll engage, that my Cerberus alone shall fix the boxes for a month.

Pat. Cerberus!

Glib. Be quiet a little. You know, I suppose, that Cerberus is a dog, and has three heads?

Pat. I have heard as much.

Glib. Then you shall see some sport—He shall be a comical dog, too, I warrant you, ha, ha, ha!

Pat. What, is Cerberus a character in your performance?

Glib. Capital, capital! I have thrown all my fancy and invention into his mouth, or rather mouths—there are three of them, you know.

Pat. Most certainly, if there are three heads.

Glib. Poh, that's nothing to what I have in petto for you—Observe me now—when Orpheus comes to the gates of hell, Cerberus stops him—but how, how—now for it—guess——

Pat. Upon my soul I can't guess.

Glib. I make his three heads sing a trio.

Pat. A trio?

Glib. A trio! I knew I should hit you—a trio, treble, tenor, and bass—and what shall they sing? nothing in the world but, Bow, wow, wow! Orpheus begins——

O bark not, Cerberus, nor grin—
A stranger, sure, to pass within,
Your goodness will allow!
Bow, wow, wow!

Treble, tenor, and bass—Then Orpheus shall tickle his lyre, and treble, tenor, and bass, shall fall asleep by degrees, and one after another, fainter and fainter—Bow, wow, wow—fast, you understand me?

Pat. Very ingenious, and very new—I hope the critics will understand it.

Glib. I will make every body understand it, or my name is not Derry-down Glib—When I write, the whole town shall understand me—You understand me?

Pat. Not very clearly, sir; but it is no matter—Here's your company.

Enter SIR TOBY, LADY FUZ, SIR MACARONI VIRTU, *and* MISS FUZ.

Glib. Ladies and gentlemen, you do me honour; Mr Patent, sir Toby, and Miss Fuz, and this sir Macaroni Virtu. [*All bow and curtsey.*] Sir Toby, one of the managers.

[*Introducing* PATENT.

Sir Toby. I am one of the manager's most humble and obedient.

Glib. I take it as a most particular compliment, sir Macaroni, that you would attend my trifle at so early an hour.

Sir Mac. Why, faith, Glib, without a compliment, I had much rather be in bed than here, or any where else. [*Yawns.*

Lady Fuz. I have a prodigious curiosity to see your play-house by day-light, Mr Manager: have not you, sir Macaroni?

Sir Mac. O no, my lady, I never have any curiosity to see it at all. [*Half asleep.*

Pat. I will prepare some tea and chocolate in the green-room for the ladies, while the prompter prepares matters for the rehearsal.

Lady Fuz. I never breakfast but once a day, Mr Manager; sir Toby, indeed, never refuses any thing at any time; he's at it from morning till night.

Sir Toby. I love to be social, my dear; besides, trifling with tea, chocolate, macaroons, bisquets, and such things, is never reckoned eating, you know.

Glib. You are indefatigably obliging, Mr Patent. [*Exit* PATENT.

Miss Fuz. Bless me, papa, what a strange place this is! I am sure I should not have known it again—I wonder where he is! I wish I could get a peep at him; and yet I am frighted out of my wits. [*Aside, and looking about.*

Sir Toby. Now the manager is gone, one may venture to say, that the play-house is no morning beauty; paint and candle-light are as great friends to the theatres, as to the ladies; they hide many wrinkles—don't they, Mr Glib? ha, ha, ha!

Glib. You have hit it, sir Toby, and this is the old house, too, ha, ha, ha!

[SIR TOBY *shews his daughter the scenes.*

Lady Fuz. [*Looking about with a glass.*] My dear sir Toby, you, you may be as sarcastical as you please; but I protest, a play-house is a prodigious odd sort of a thing, now there is nobody in it—is it not, sir Macaroni?

Sir Mac. O yes, and a prodigious odd sort of a thing, when 'tis full too—I abominate a play-house; my ingenious countrymen have no taste now for the high seasoned comedies; and I am sure that I have none for the pap and loplolly of our present writers.

Glib. Bravo, sir Macaroni! I would not give a pin for a play, no more than a partridge, that has not the fumet.

Sir Mac. Not amiss, faith! ha, ha, ha!

Lady Fuz. Don't let us lose time, Mr Glib; if they are not ready for the rehearsal, suppose the manager entertains us with thunder and lightning, and lets us see his traps, and his whims, and harlequin pantomimes.

Sir Toby. And a shower of rain, or an eclipse; and I must beg one peep at the Patagonians.

Miss Fuz. Pray, Mr Glib, let us have some thunder and lightning.

Glib. Your commands shall be obeyed, Miss; I'll whip up to the clouds, and be your Jupiter Tonans in a crack. [*Exit.*

Sir Mac. A play-house in England is to me as dull as a church, and fit only to sleep in.

Lady Fuz. Sir Toby thinks so, too——I'll tell you what happened the last time we were there.

Miss Fuz. Ay, do, my dear lady, tell what happened to papa; 'twas very droll.

Sir Toby. Fy, fy, Fanny!—my lady, you should not tell tales out of school. 'Twas an accident.

Lady Fuz. A very common one with you, my dear: We dined late, sir Toby could not take his nap, and we came early to the house; in ten minutes he fell fast asleep against the box-door, his wig half off, his mouth wide open, and snoring like a rhinoceros.

Sir Mac. Well, but the catastrophe, lady Fuz?

Lady Fuz. The pit and galleries fell a laughing and clapping; I jogged and pulled him, till my arms ached; and if the box-keeper had not luckily opened the door, and sir Toby fell headlong into the passage, I should have died with shame.

Sir Toby. You'll not die with tenderness, I believe; for I got a lump upon my head as big as an egg, and have not been free from the headach ever since.

Miss Fuz. I shall never forget what a flump my papa came down with—Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Mac. The tenderness runs in the family, sir Toby.

Lady Fuz. Pray don't you adore Shakespeare, Sir Mac!

Sir Mac. Shakespeare!

[*Yawning.*

Lady Fuz. Sir Toby and I are absolute worshippers of him——we very often act some of his best tragedy scenes to divert ourselves.

Sir Mac. And it must be very diverting, I dare swear.

Sir Toby. What, more family secrets! for shame, lady Fuz——

Lady Fuz. You need not be ashamed of your talents, my dear—I will venture to say you are the best Romeo, that ever appeared.

Sir Toby. Pooh, pooh!

Sir Mac. I have not the least doubt of sir Toby's genius—But don't your ladyship think he rather carries too much flesh for the lover—Does your ladyship incline to tragedy, too?

Lady Fuz. I have my feelings, sir—and, if sir Toby will favour you with two or three speeches, I will stand up for Juliet.

Sir Toby. I vow, lady Fuz, you distress me beyond measure—I never have any voice till the evening.

Miss Fuz. Never mind being a little husky, papa! do tear your wig, throw yourself upon the ground, and poison yourself.

Sir Mac. This is a glorious scene, faith!—— [*Aside.*] Sir Toby looks as if he were susceptible of the tender passions.

Lady Fuz. Too much so, indeed; he is too amiable not to be a little faithless—he has been a great libertine——have not you, sir Toby? have you not wronged me? Come, give me a pinch of your snuff——

[*Takes snuff out of his box.*]

Sir Toby. Forget and forgive, my dear—if my constitution erred, my affections never did——I have told you so a thousand times.

Sir Mac. A wonderful couple, upon my soul! [*Aside.*

Enter GLIB.

Glib. Ladies, you can't possibly have any thunder and lightning this morning; one of the planks of the thunder-trunk started the other night, and had not Jupiter stepped aside to drink a pot of porter, he had been knocked in the head with his own thunder-bolt.

Lady Fuz. Well, let us go into the green-room, then, and see the actors and actresses—Is Clive there? I should be glad of all things to see that woman off the stage.

Glib. She never attends here, but when she is wanted.

Lady Fuz. Bless me! If I was an actress, I should never be a moment out of the playhouse.

Sir Mac. And, if I had my will, I would never be a moment in it.

Lady Fuz. I wish I could have seen Clive! I think her a droll creature—nobody has half so good an opinion of her as I have.

[*Exit* LADY FUZ.

Miss Fuz. For my part, I had rather have had a little thunder and lightning, than all the tea and chocolate in the world. [*Going.*] I wonder I don't see him. [*Aside.*

[*Exit* MISS FUZ.

Sir Mac. What a set of people am I with!—what a place I am in, and what an entertainment am I to go through! But I can't go through it—so, I'll e'en get into my chair again, and escape from these Hottentots—I wish with all my soul that sir Toby, my lady, and miss, the author and his piece, the managers, their playhouse and their performers, were all at the bottom of the Thames, and that I were fast asleep in my bed again. [*Exit.*

Enter WILSON.

Wil. [*Peeping.*] I durst not discover myself, though I saw her dear eyes looking about for me. If I could see her for a moment now, as the stage is clear, and no body to overlook us, who knows but I might kindle up her spirit this moment to run away with me—Hah! What noise is that? There she is! Miss Fanny, Miss Fanny! here I am—By Heavens, she comes——

Enter MISS FUZ.

Miss Fuz. O dear, how I flutter! I can't stay long—my papa and mamma were going to rehearse Romeo and Juliet, or I could not have stole out now.

Wil. Let you and I act those parts in earnest, miss, and fly to Lawrence's cell——Love has given us the opportunity, and we shall forfeit his protection if we don't make the best use of it.

Miss Fuz. Indeed, I can't go away with you now—I will find a better opportunity soon——perhaps, to-morrow——Let me return to the green-room; if we are seen together, we shall be separated for ever.

Wil. To prevent that, let me lead you a private way through the house to a post-chaise——we shall be out of reach before sir Toby and my lady have gone half through Romeo and Juliet.

Miss Fuz. Don't insist upon it now—I could not for the world—my fear has taken away all my inclinations.

Wil. I must run away with you now, Miss Fuz—Indeed I must.

Miss Fuz. Have you really a post-chaise ready!

Wil. I have, indeed! A post-chaise and four.

Miss Fuz. A post-chaise and four!——Bless me!

Wil. Four of the best bays in London, and my postilions are in blue jackets, with silver shoulder-knots.

Miss Fuz. With silver shoulder-knots! nay, then there is no resisting—and yet——

Wil. Nay, quickly, quickly determine, my dear Miss Fuz!

Miss Fuz. I will determine, then; I will sit by my papa at the rehearsal, and when he is asleep, which he will be in ten minutes, and my mamma will be deaf, dumb, and blind to every thing but Mr Glib's wit—I'll steal out of the box from them, and you shall run away with me as fast as you can, wherever your four bays and silver shoulder-knots please to take me.

Wil. Upon my knees, I thank you, and thus I take an earnest of my happiness. [*Kisses her hand.*] Zounds! here's your mamma, miss——don't be alarmed—Lady! by yonder blessed moon, I vow!

Miss Fuz. Oh, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon!

Lady Fuz. [*Approaching.*] Let us have no sun, moon, and stars now——What are you about, my dear? Who is this young gentleman you are so free with?

Miss Fuz. This is the young gentleman actor, mamma, whose benefit we were at last summer, and, while you were busy acting in the green-room, I stole out here to try how my voice would sound upon the stage, and finding him here, I begged him to teach me a little how to play Juliet.

Lady Fuz. O, very well, my dear! we are obliged to the young gentleman, to be sure! your papa will teach you, child, and play Romeo with you; you should not be too free with these actors. [*Aside.*] I am much obliged to you, sir, for the pains you have taken with my daughter—we are very sensible of your politeness, and you may bring us some tickets, when your benefit time comes.

Wil. I am greatly honoured by your ladyship, and will go through all the scenes of Romeo and Juliet with miss, whenever she pleases.

Lady Fuz. O, no, young man! her papa is a very fine actor, and a great critic; and he will have nobody teach her these things but himself——Thank the gentleman, child! [*She curtsies.*] Why did not you stay to hear your papa and me? Go, go, my dear, and I'll follow you! [*Exit* Miss.] Upon my word, a likely young man! your servant, sir! and very likely to turn a young woman's head; were it not for setting my daughter a bad example, I should like to go over some scenes of Juliet with him myself.

[*Exit, looking at him.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The stage.*

Enter GLIB, SIR TOBY, LADY *and* MISS FUZ, PATENT, *&c.*

Glib. What, we have lost sir Macaroni! no great matter, for he was half asleep all the time he was here—very little better than caput mortuum—Now, ladies, and gentlemen of the jury, take your places—Hiss and clap, condemn or applaud me, as your taste directs you, and Apollo and the Nine send me a good deliverance!

Lady Fuz. We'll go into the front boxes——What is the matter with you, Fanny? You had rather be at your inconstant moon, than hear Mr Glib's wit.

Miss Fan. I never was happier in all my life, mamma. [*Sighs.*] What will become of me? [*Aside.*

Sir Toby. I shall be very critical, Mr Author.

Lady Fuz. Pray, are we to have a prologue, Mr Glib? We positively must have a prologue!

Glib. Most certainly! *entre nous*—I have desired the manager to write me one—which has so flattered him, that I shall be able to do any thing with him. [*Aside to* LADY FUZ.] I know them all from the patentees, down to the waiting fellows in green coats——

Sir Toby. You are very happy in your acquaintance, sir.

Lady Fuz. I wish some of the stage folks

would shew me round to the boxes——Who's there!

Enter JOHNSTON.

John. I'll conduct your ladyship round, if you please.

Lady Fuz. Thank you, Mr Johnston——Remember my box the first night—and don't forget Clive's benefit.

John. I won't, my lady.

Lady Fuz. Come, now for it, Glib! I shall have both my ears open; and I hope sir Toby will do as much by his eyes———Come, Fanny, my dear, this way.

[*Exit* LADY FUZ, *&c.*

Miss Fuz. I'll go my own way for the first time: now my spirits are up again—I have slipt my leading strings; and if dear Mr Wilson's bays and postillions keep pace with my fancy, my papa and mamma must run a little faster than they do to overtake me.

[*Exit* MISS FUZ.

Enter PROMPTER.

Glib. I hope, Mr Hopkins, that nobody has got secretly into the house; I would have none but friends at the first rehearsal.

[*Looking round the house.*

Hop. You see the house is quite clear, sir.

Glib. I would not have the town have the least idea of my performance before hand——I would open a mask battery of entertainment upon the public.

Hop. You'll surprise them, I believe, sir!

Glib. Pray be so good as to ring down the curtain, that we may rehearse in form—So, so, so! very well; and now I'll say a word or two to the [*Curtain drops.*] gentlemen in the orchestra—Gentlemen, [*To the orchestra.*] I shall take it as a particular favour, if you would be careful of your pianos and fortes; they are the light and shade, and without them music is all noise, and singing nothing but bawling———

Musician.—[*From the orchestra.*]—I don't quite understand this movement———Is it allegro, sir?

Glib. Allegro, spiritoso! Flash, flash, fire! my friends—you gentlemen haut-boys, take particular care of your little solos—You bassoons, support them, con gusto—not too powerfully—mind a delicacy of feeling in your second movement—Make yourselves ready, gentlemen——Shoulder your fiddles—cock your bows—and the moment I vanish, fire away, crash! I leave my fame in your hands—my lady—sir Toby, are you got round? O, very well! I see you—Don't forget a cordial now and then for the poor author.

[*Speaking to the audience, and making a sign of clapping.*

[*During the burletto,* GLIB, *the author, goes out and comes in several times upon the stage, and speaks occasionally to the performers, as his fancy prompts him, in order to enliven the action, and give a proper comic spirit to the performance.*]

OVERTURE

TO THE

BURLETTA OF ORPHEUS.

The curtain rises to soft music after the Overture, and discovers ORPHEUS *asleep upon a couch with his lyre near him—after the symphony—*

Recitative accompanied.

ORPHEUS *dreaming.*

I come—I go—I must—I will.

[*Half awake.*

Bless me! Where am I? here I'm still!

[*Quite awake.*

Though dead, she haunts me still, my wife!
In death my torment, as in life;
By day, by night, whene'er she catches
Poor me asleep—she thumps and scratches;
No more she cries, with harlot's revel,
But fetch me, Orpheus, from the devil!

AIR.

Though she scolded all day, and all night did the same,
Though she was too rampant, [and I was too tame;
Though shriller her notes, than the ear-piercing fife,
I must, and I will, go to hell for my wife!

As the sailor can't rest, if the winds are too still,
As the miller sleeps best by the clack of his mill,
So I was most happy in tumult and strife;
I must, and I will, go to hell for my wife!

[*Going out.*

Enter RHODOPE.

Recitative.

Rho. Your wife, you driv'ler!—is it so?
But I'll play hell before you go!

Orph. With fear and shame, my cheeks are scarlet;
I've prais'd my wife, before my harlot.

Rho. Go, fetch your wife, thou simple man;
What! keep us both?—is that your plan?
And dar'st thou, Orpheus, think of two,
When one's too much by one for you?

Orph. My mind is fix'd—in vain this strife;
To hell I go, to fetch my wife.—
[*Going,* RHODOPE *holds him.*

AIR.

Rho. Is this your affection,
Your vows and protection,
To bring back your wife to your house?
When she knows what I am,
As a wolf the poor lamb,
As a cat she will mumble the mouse.
[*In tears.*

AIR.

Orph. Pray cease your pathetic,
And I'll be prophetic;
Two ladies at once in my house,
Two cats they will be,
And mumble poor me;
The poor married man is the mouse.

Rho. Yet hear me! Orpheus, can you be
So vulgar, as to part with me,
And fetch your wife?—am I forsaken?
O give me back what you have taken!
In vain I rave, my fate deplore,
A ruin'd maid is maid no more;
Your love alone is reputation,
Give me but that, and this for reputation.
[*Snaps her fingers.*

AIR.

When, Orpheus, you
Were kind and true,
Of joy I had my fill,
Now Orpheus roves,
And faithless proves,
Alas! the bitter pill!

As from the bogs,
The wounded frogs
Call'd out, I call to thee;
O naughty boy,
To you 'tis joy,
Alas! 'tis death to me.

Orph. In vain are all your sobs, and sighs,
In vain the rhet'rick of your eyes;
To wind and rain my heart is rock:
The more you cry—the more I'm block.

Rho. Since my best weapon, crying, fails,
I'll try my tongue, and then my nails.

AIR.

Mount if you will, and reach the sky,
Quick as lightning would I fly,
And there would give you battle;
Like the thunder I would rattle.
Seek, if you will, the shades below;
Thither, thither, will I go,
Your faithless heart appal!
My rage no bounds shall know—
Revenge my bosom stings,
And jealousy has wings,
To rise above them all!
[ORPHEUS *snatches up the lyre.*

Orph. This is my weapon; don't advance!
I'll make you sleep, or make you dance.

AIR.

One med'cine cures the gout,
Another cures a cold,
This can drive your passions out,
Nay, even cure a scold.
Have you gout or vapours,
I in sleep
Your senses steep,
Or make your legs cut capers.

Duetto, accompanied with the lyre.

Rho. I cannot have my swing,
Orph. Ting, ting, ting.
Rho. My tongue has lost its twang,
Orph. Tang, tang, tang.
Rho. My eyes begin to twinkle,
Orph. Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle.
Rho. My hands dingle, dangle,
Orph. Tangle, tangle, tangle.
Rho. My spirits sink,
Orph. Tink, tink, tink.
Rho. Alas, my tongue!
Orph. Tang, tang, tong.
Rho. Now 'tis all o'er,
I can no more,
But—go-to-sleep—and—sno-o-re.
[*Sinks by degrees upon a couch, and falls asleep.*

Orph. 'Tis done, I'm free,
And now for thee,
Eurydice!
Behold what's seldom seen in life,
I leave my mistress for my wife.

Who's there!
[*Calls a servant, who peeps in.*
Come in—nay, never peep;
The danger's o'er—she's fast asleep:
Do not too soon her fury rouse,
I go to hell, to fetch my spouse.

AIR.

Though she scolded all day, and all night did the same,
Though she was too rampant, and I was too tame;

Though shriller her notes than the ear-piercing fife,
I must, and I will, go to hell for my wife.
[*Exit singing.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to a mountainous country; cows, sheep, goats, &c.*

After a short symphony—Enter ORPHEUS, *playing upon his lyre.*

AIR.

Thou dear companion of my life,
My friend, my mistress, and my wife,
Much dearer than all three!
Should they be faithless and deceive me,
Thy grand specific can relieve me,
All med'cines are in thee,
Thou *veritable beaume de vie!*

Recitative.

Now wake my lyre, to sprightlier strains,
Inspire with joy both beasts and swains,
Give us no soporific potion,
But notes shall set the fields in motion.

AIR.

Breathe no ditty,
Soft and pretty,
Charming female tongues to sleep;
Goats shall flaunt it,
Cows currant it,
Shepherds frisk it with their sheep!

Enter OLD SHEPHERD *with others.*

Recitative.

Old Shep. Stop, stop your noise, you fiddling fool!
We want not here a dancing school!

Orph. Shepherd, be cool; forbear this vap'ring,
Or this shall set you all a cap'ring.

Old Shep. Touch it again, and I shall strait
Beat time with this upon your pate.

Orph. I dare you all, your threats, your blows;
Come one and all! we now are foes.

Old Shep. Zounds! what's the matter with my toes?
[*Begins to dance.*

AIR.

From top to toe,
Above, below,
The tingling runs about me;
I feel it here,
I feel it there,
Within me, and without me.

AIR.

Orph. From top to toe,
Above, below,
The charm shall run about you
Now tingle here,
Now tingle there,
Within you, and without you.

AIR.

Old Shep. O cut those strings,
Those tickling things,
Of that same cursed scraper!

Chorus of Shepherds.

We're dancing too,
And we, like you,
Can only cut a caper.

AIR.

Orph. They cut the strings,
Those foolish things!
They cannot hurt the scraper;
They're dancing too,
And they, like you,
Can only cut a caper.

Chorus.

We're dancing too,
And we, like you,
Can only cut a caper.

AIR.

Old Shep. As I'm alive,
I'm sixty-five,
And that's no age for dancing;
I'm past the game,
O fie for shame!
Old men should not be prancing
O cut the strings,
Those tickling things,
Of that same cursed scraper!

Chorus.

We're dancing too,
And we, like you,
Can only cut a caper.

AIR.

Orph. They cut the strings,
Those foolish things!
They cannot hurt the scraper;
They're dancing too,
And they, like you,
Can only cut a caper.

Chorus,

We're dancing too,
And we, like you,
Can only cut a caper.

[ORPHEUS *leads out the shepherds in a grand chorus of singing and dancing, and the beasts following them.*

Glib. Here's a scene, lady Fuz!—If this won't do, what the devil will? tal, lal, lal, lal!—[*Dancing.*] Thank you, gentlemen. [*To the orchestra.*] Admirably well done, indeed!—I'll kiss you all round, over as much punch as the double bass will hold.

Enter PATENT.

There, Mr Manager, is an end of an act—Every beast upon his hind-legs!—I did intend, that houses and trees (according to the old story) should have joined in the dance; but it would have crouded the stage too much.

Pat. Full enough as it is, Mr Glib.

Lady Fuz. [*Without.*] Let me come, let me come, I say!

Glib. D'ye hear, d'ye hear? her ladyship's in raptures, I find;——I knew I should touch her.

Enter LADY FUZ.

Lady Fuz. These are fine doings; fine doings, Mr Glib!

Glib. And a fine effect they will have, my lady; particularly the dancing off of the beasts.

Lady Fuz. Yes, yes; they have danced off, but they shall dance back again, take my word for it. [*Walks about.*

Glib. My dear lady, and so they shall; don't be uneasy; they shall dance back again directly ——here, prompter, I intended to have the scene over again; I could see it forever.

Lady Fuz. Was this your plot, Mr Glib? Or your contrivance, Mr Manager?

Pat. Madam!

Glib. No, upon my soul! 'tis all my own contrivance; not a thought stole from ancient, or modern; all my own plot!

Lady Fuz. Call my servants! I'll have a post-chaise directly; I see your guilt, by your vain endeavours to hide it; this is the most bare-faced impudence!

Glib. Impudence!——may I die, if I know an indecent expression in the whole piece!

Pat. Your passion, madam, runs away with you; I don't understand you.

Lady Fuz. No, sir! 'tis one of your stage-players has run away with my daughter; and I'll be revenged on you all!—I'll shut up your house!

Pat. This must be inquired into.

[*Exit* PATENT.

Glib. What! did Miss Fuz run away without seeing Orpheus?

Lady Fuz. Don't say a word more, thou blockhead!

Glib. I am dumb, but no blockhead!

Enter SIR TOBY, *in confusion.*

Sir Toby. What is all this? what is it all about?

Lady Fuz. Why, it is all your fault, sir Toby! had not you been asleep, she could never have been stolen from your side.

Sir Toby. How do you know she is stolen? Enquire first, my lady, and be in a passion afterwards.

Lady Fuz. I know she's gone; I saw her with a young fellow—he was upon his knees, swearing by the moon——let us have a post-chaise, sir Toby, directly, and follow them!

Sir Toby. Let us dine first, my dear, and I'll go wherever you please.

Lady Fuz. Dine, dine! Did you ever hear the like? you have no more feeling, sir Toby, than your periwig.—I shall go distracted! the greatest curse of a poor woman is, to have a flighty daughter, and a sleepy husband.

[*Exit* LADY FUZ.

Sir Toby. And the greatest curse of a poor man is, to have every body flighty in his family but himself. [*Exit.*

Enter PATENT.

Pat. 'Tis true, Mr Glib, the young lady is gone off, but with nobody that belongs to us——'tis a dreadful affair!

Glib. So it is, faith! to spoil my rehearsal—I think it was very ungenteel of her, to choose this morning for her pranks. Though she might make free with her father and mother, she should have more manners than to treat me so; I'll tell her as much when I see her. The second act shall be ready for you next week—I depend upon you for a prologue—your genius——

Pat. You are too polite, Mr Glib—have you an epilogue?

Glib. I have a kind of address here, by way of epilogue, to the town—I suppose it to be spoken by myself, as the author—who have you can represent me?—no easy task, let me tell you—he must be a little smart, degagee, and not want assurance.

Pat. Smart, degagee, and not want assurance?—King is the very man.

Glib. Thank, thank you! dear Mr Patent,—the very man—is he in the house? I would read it to him.

Pat. O no! since the audience received him in Linco, he is practising music, whenever he is not wanted here.

Glib. I have heard as much; and that he con-

tinually sets his family's teeth on edge, with scraping upon the fiddle.—Conceit, conceit, Mr Patent, is the ruin of them all. I could wish, when he speaks this address, that he would be more easy in his carriage, and not have that damned jerk in his bow, that he generally treats us with.

Pat. I'll hint as much to him.

Glib. This is my conception of the matter;—Bow your body gently, turn your head semicircularly, on one side and the other; and, smiling thus, agreeably begin:

All fable is fiction—I, your bard, will maintain it;
And lest you don't know it, 'tis fit I explain it:
The lyre of our Orpheus means your approbation;
Which frees the poor poet from care and vexation:
Shou'd want make his mistress too keen to dispute,
Your smiles fill his pockets—and madam is mute:
Shou'd his wife, that's himself——for they two are but one——
Be in hell, that's in debt, and the money gone;
Your favour brings comfort, at once cures the evil,
For 'scaping bum bailiffs, is 'scaping the devil;
Nay, cerberus-critics their fury will drop,
For such barking monsters your smiles are a sop;
But how to explain what you most will require,
That cows, sheep, and calves, shou'd dance after the lyre?
Without your kind favour, how scanty each meal!
But with it comes dancing, beef, mutton, and veal;
For sing it, or say it, this truth we all see,
Your applause will be ever the true *beaume de vie.*

THE

DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

DEVIL.
SIR THOMAS MAXWELL, *father to* HARRIET.
INVOICE, *attached to* HARRIET.

Doctors.

BROADBRIM.
OSASAFRAS.
FINGERFEE.
CAMPHIRE.
CALOMEL.
DIACHYLON.
HABAKKUK.
SLIGO.
DR LAST.
JOHNNY MACPHERSON.
JULEP.
APOZEM.
FORCEPS.
SECRETARY.
Printer's Devil.

WOMEN.

MARGARET, *sister to* SIR THOMAS MAXWELL.
HARRIET, *attached to* INVOICE.

Servants, &c.

Scene—Madrid, and London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A room.*

Enter SIR THOMAS MAXWELL *and* MARGARET.

Sir Tho. WHY, the woman is mad! these cursed newspaper patriots have shattered her brains! nothing less than a senator of seven years standing can conceive what she means.

Mar. Why, sir Thomas, my conversation is neither deficient in order, precision, or dignity.

Sir Tho. Dignity! and what occasion for dignity in the common concerns of my house? why the deuce can't you converse like the rest of the world? If you want money to pay off my bills, you move me for further supplies; if I turn away a servant, you condemn me for so often changing my ministry; and because I lock up my daughter, to prevent her eloping with the paltry clerk of a pitiful trader, it is, forsooth, an invasion of the bill of rights, and a mortal stab to the great charter of liberty!

Mar. As Serjeant Second'em said, in the debate on the corn-bill, "Then why don't you chuse "better ground, brother, and learn to enlarge "your bottom a little? Consider, you must draw "the line of liberty somewhere; for if these "rights belong"——

Sir Tho. Mercy on us!

Mar. But, indeed, my dear brother, you are

got quite out of your depth: Woman, I tell you, is a microcosm; and rightly to rule her, requires as great talents, as to govern a state. And what says the aphorism of cardinal Polignac? "If you "would not have a person deceive you, be care-"ful not to let him know you mistrust him!" and so of your daughter.

Sir Tho. Mrs Margaret Maxwell, bestow your advice where it is wanted! Out of my depth! a likely story indeed, that I, who am fixed here in a national trust, appointed guardian of the English interest at the court of Madrid, should not know how to manage a girl!

Mar. And pray, Mr Consul, what information will your station afford you? I don't deny your knowledge in export and import, nor doubt your skill in the difference between wet and dry goods; you may weigh, with exactness, the balance of trade, or explain the true spirit of a treaty of commerce; the surface, the mere skimmings of the political pot!

Sir Tho. Mighty well!

Mar. But had you, with me, traced things to their original source; had you discovered all social subordination to arise from original compact; had you read Machiavel, Montesquieu, Locke, Bacon, Hobbes, Harrington, Hume; had you studied the political testaments of Alberoni and cardinal Richlieu——

Sir Tho. Mercy on us!

Mar. Had you analyzed the pragmatic sanction, and the family compact; had you toiled through the laborious page of the Vinerian professor, or estimated the prevailing manners with the vicar of Newcastle; in a word, had you read Amicus upon Taxation, and Inimicus upon Representation, you would have known——

Sir Tho. What!

Mar. That, in spite of the frippery French Salique laws, woman is a free agent, a noun substantive entity, and, when treated with confidence——

Sir Tho. Why, perhaps, she may not abuse it: But still, my sage sister, it is but a perhaps; now, my method is certain, infallible; by confining her, I can't be deceived.

Mar. And pray, sir, what right have you to confine her? look in your Puffendorf! though born in Spain, she is a native of England; her birth-right is liberty—a better patrimonial estate than any of your despotic countries could give her.

Sir Tho. Zooks, you would tire the patience of Job! Pray, answer me this; is Harriet my daughter?

Mar. What then? for that inestimable blessing she is not beholden to you; nor can you, though a father, with reason, justice, or law, take it from her.

Sir Tho. Why, Margaret, you forget where you are! This, child, is the town of Madrid; you are amongst a sage, steady people, who know and revere the natural rights of a parent.

Mar. Natural rights! Can a right to tyrannize be founded in nature?

Sir Tho. Look'e, Margaret! you are but losing your time; for, unless you can prevail on count Wall, or the president of Castille, to grant you a habeas, why, Harriet shall stay where she is.

Mar. Ay, ay, you know where you are; but, if my niece will take my advice, the justice, that is denied to her here, she will instantly seek for elsewhere.

Sir Tho. Elsewhere? hark you, sister! is it thus you answer my purpose in bringing you hither? I hoped to have my daughter's principles formed by your prudence; her conduct directed by your experience and wisdom.

Mar. The preliminary is categorically true.

Sir Tho. Then, why don't you abide by the treaty?

Mar. Yes; you have given me powerful motives!

Sir. Tho. But another word, madam! as I don't chuse that Harriet should imbibe any more of your romantic republican notions, I shall take it as a great favour, if you would prepare to quit this country with the first opportunity.

Mar. You need not have remonstrated; a petition would have answered your purpose: I did intend to withdraw, and without taking leave; nor will I reside on a spot, where the great charter of my sex is hourly invaded! No, sir Thomas; I shall return to the land of liberty! but there expect to have your despotic dealings properly and publicly handled.

Sir Tho. What, you design to turn author?

Mar. There's no occasion for that; liberty has already a champion in one of my sex: The same pen, that has dared to scourge the arbitrary actions of some of our monarchs, shall do equal justice to the oppressive power of parents.

Sir Tho. With all my heart!

Mar. I may, perhaps, be too late to get you into the historical text; but, I promise you, you shall be soundly swinged in the marginal notes.

Enter a Servant, who whispers SIR THOMAS.

Sir Tho. What, now?

Ser. This instant.

Sir Tho. How did he get in?

Ser. By a ladder of ropes, dropped, I suppose, by Miss Harriet, from the balcony.

Sir Tho. That way, I reckon, he thinks to retreat; but I shall prevent him. Here, Dick, do you and Ralph run into the street, and front the house with a couple of carbines; bid James bring my toledo; and let the rest of the fellows follow my steps.

Mar. Hey-day! what can be the meaning of this civil commotion?

Sir Tho. Nothing extraordinary; only the natural consequence of some of your salutary suggestions.

Mar. Mine, sir Thomas?

Sir Tho. Yes, yours, sister Margaret!

Mar. I don't understand you.

Sir Tho. Oh, nothing but Harriet making use of her great natural charter of liberty, by letting young Invoice, Abraham Indigo's clerk, by the means of a ladder of ropes, into her chamber.

Mar. I am not surprised.

Sir Tho. Nor I, neither.

Mar. The instant your suspicions gave her a guard, I told her the act was tantamount to an open declaration of war, and sanctified every stratagem.

Sir Tho. You did? mighty well, madam! I hope, then, for once, you will approve my proceedings; the law of nations shall be strictly observed; you shall see how a spy ought to be treated, who is caught in the enemy's camp!

Enter Servant, with the toledo.

Oh, here's my trusty toledo! Come, follow your leader! [*Exit with servants.*

Mar. Oh, sir, I shall pursue, and reconnoitre your motions; and, though no cartel is settled between you, take care how you infringe the *jus gentium.* [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber.*

HARRIET *and* INVOICE *discovered.*

Har. Are you sure you were not observed?

Inv. I believe not.

Har. Well, Mr Invoice, you can, I think, now no longer doubt of my kindness; though, let me tell you, you are a good deal indebted for this early proof of it to my father's severity.

In. I am sorry, madam, an event, so happy for me, should proceed from so unlucky a cause: But are there no hopes that sir Thomas may be softened in time?

Har. None: he is, both from nature and habit, inflexibly obstinate. This, too, is his favourite foible; no German baron was ever more attached to the genealogical laws of alliance than he: Marry his daughter to a person in trade? No! Put his present favourite out of the question, he can never be brought to submit to it.

In. Dear Miss Harriet, then why will you hesitate? there can be no other alternative; you must either submit to marry the count, or, by flight, escape from the——

Har. No, Mr Invoice, not till the last necessity drives me. Besides, where can we go? how subsist? who will receive us?

In. 'The world is all before us where to chuse;' and, as we fly from oppression, 'Providence our guide.'

Har. The world, Mr Invoice, is but a cold kind of common; and, as to Providence, let us first be sure we deserve its protection—[*A noise without.*] Bless me! don't I hear some bustle below?

In. Madam!

Har. Hush! my father, as I live! I fear, Mr Invoice, you are discovered.

In. No, surely!

Sir Tho. [*Without.*] Have you secured all the posts?

Ser. [*Without.*] All, sir.

Sir Tho. Both the front and the rear?

Ser. Both.

Har. Lost, past redemption!

Sir Tho. Then advance! now let us unharbour the rascal!

Har. What can we do?

Sir Tho. Come, madam, open your doors!

Har. The balcony! quick, Mr Invoice! the balcony!

Sir Tho. Unlock, Mrs Minx! your minion is discovered!

In. A couple of fellows stand below, with their pieces pointed directly against it.

Sir Tho. What, then, you will compel us to batter?

Har. The whole house is surrounded! how can you escape?

In. Where will this window conduct us?

Har. To the leads that join our house to the chemist's.

In. To the leads? it is but a step; there is no danger.

Har. Then instantly fly! you have every thing to fear from my father.

Sir Tho. John, fetch the mattock and crow!

In. And leave my Harriet behind me?

Har. Secure yourself, and abandon me to my fate.

In. No, madam, that I will never do; I'll dare your father's utmost resentment.

Sir Tho. Where is that rascal a-loitering?

Har. Then you are lost!

In. Would my Harriet accompany my flight—

Har. Can you desire it?

In. I do, I do; my dearest angel, I do! By all that's sacred, your honour shall be as secure with me as in the cell of a saint!

Har. But character, decency, prudence—

In. The occasion, the danger, all justify—

Sir Tho. Oh, what, you are come at last!

In. Determine, my life! You have but a moment—

Har. Should you, Mr Invoice, deceive me—

In. When I do, may my last hope deceive me!

Har. It is a bold, a dangerous step!

In. Fear nothing, my love!

[*Advances to the window, and gets out.*

Sir Tho. Drive at the pannel.

Mar. [*Without.*] I enter my protest!

Sir Tho. And I will enter the room!

In. Now leap; all is safe,

[HARRIET *gets out at the window.*

Sir Thomas, adieu!

Sir Tho. Wrench open the lock!

Mar. Ay, do, at your peril!

Sir Tho. Down with the door!

Mar. Then you shall all be swingeingly soused. Produce your authority!

Sir Tho. Mine.

Mar. You have none: not so much as the sanction of a general warrant.

Sir Tho. What, then, I see I must do it myself: There it goes! Pretty law, indeed, to lock a man out of his own house!

Enter SIR THOMAS, MARGARET, *and Servants.*

Now, Mrs——Heyday! what are become of the parties? vanished?

Mar. Deceived by your spies! no uncommon thing, brother, for a blundering general.

Sir Tho. You are sure you saw him come in?

Ser. Certain, sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Then I warrant we will ferret them out. Come, lads, let not a corner escape you!

[*Exeunt* SIR THOMAS *and Servants.*

Mar. I shall wait on your motions, and bring up the rear. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Changes to the chymist's.*

Enter INVOICE *and* HARRIET, *through the sash.*

In. Safely landed, however.

Har. Are you sure you are not pursued?

In. Not a soul: never fear! they will hardly venture this road.

Har. What a step have you induced me to take! to what distress and difficulties have I exposed myself!

In. Banish your fears, and let us look forward, my love.

Har. Nay, I have gone too far to retreat. Well, sir, what is next to be done?

In. The Spaniards are naturally generous; perhaps, upon hearing our story, the owner of the house may lend his assistance. This, I suppose, is the laboratory, and this door leads to the shop.

Devil. [*In a bottle.*] Heigh-ho!

Har. Who is that?

In. That! where?

Har. Did not you hear a voice?

In. None. Fancy, my love: only your fears.

Devil. Heigh-ho!

Har. There again!

In. I hear it now—Who is there?

Devil. Me.

In. Me! he speaks English! Who and where are you?

Devil. Here, in this bottle, where I have been corked up for these six months.

In. Corked up in a bottle! I never heard of such a thing in my life, unless, indeed, in the Haymarket once. Corked up in a bottle, d'ye say?

Devil. Ay; by the master of this house, a magician.

In. A magician! Why, then, you are a spirit, I suppose?

Devil. You are right; I am the devil.

Har. Mercy on us!

Devil. Don't be terrified, miss: You remember the old proverb. 'The devil is not so black as he is painted.'

In. Well, but, sir——

Devil. A truce to your questions, my good sir, for the present! Consider, rammed up in this narrow compass, I can't be much at my ease now, if you will but break the bottle before you on the floor——

Har. For Heaven's sake, Mr Invoice, take care what you do!

Devil. Why, my pretty miss, what risque do you run? your affairs can hardly be changed for the worse.

Har. That's true, indeed!

Devil. Believe me, miss, as matters stand, we can be of mutual use: Your lover may deliver me from prison, and I can prevent you both from going into confinement.

In. What says my Harriet? shall I rely on the gentleman's word?

Devil. Do, madam! I am a devil of honour. Besides, you have but a little time to consider; in less than five minutes, you will have the consul and all his crew in the house.

In. Nay, then—Pray, which is the bottle?

Devil. That in the middle, right before you.

In. There it goes!

[*He breaks the bottle, and Devil rises out of it—Thunder.*

Har. Oh, what a——

Devil. I am not surprised, miss, that you are a little shocked at my figure: I could have assumed a much more agreeable form; but as we are to be a little better acquainted, I thought it best to quit all disguise and pretence; therefore, madam, you see me just as I am.

Har. I am sure, sir, you are ve—ve—very agreeable.

Devil. Yo—yo—you are pleased to compliment, madam. Come, answer me sincerely; am I such a being as you expected to see?

Har. Really, sir, I can hardly say what I expected to see.

Devil. I own it is a puzzling question; at least, if the world does us justice in the contradictory qualities they are pleased to afford us.

In. You will forgive me, if I don't understand you.

Devil. Why, for all their superlative epithets, you cannot but see how much men are beholden to us; by our means it is, that you measure the extent both of your virtues and vices.

Inv. As how?

Devil. As thus: In describing your friends, or your foes, they are *devilish* rich, *devilish* poor, *devilish* ugly, *devilish* handsome! now and then, indeed, to vary the mode of conversing, you make a little free with our condition and country; as, *hellish* dull, *damned* clever, *hellish* cold: psha! how *damned* hot it is!

Inv. True, sir; but I consider this as a rhetorical figure, a manner of speaking devised and practised by dulness, to conceal the lack of ideas, and the want of expressions.

Devil. Partly that, I confess: not but there is some truth in the case; for at different times we have the power, and do assume the various forms, you assign us.

Inv. We? I observe you always make use of the plural; is that, sir, by way of distinction, or, is your family pretty large and extensive?

Devil. Multitudinous, as the sands on the beach, or the mots in a sun-beam: how the deuce else do you think we could do all the business below? Why, there's scarce an individual amongst you, at least of any rank or importance, but has five or six of us in his train.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. A little before I got rammed in that phial, I had been for some time on very hard duty in this part of the world.

Inv. Of what kind?

Devil. The Dæmon of Power and I had long laid siege to a subject, the man a grandee. I was then a popular spirit, and wore the mask of a patriot; at different times, we possessed him by turns; but, in the midst of a violent struggle (by which means I got lame on this leg, and obtained the nick-name of the Devil Upon Two Sticks), the Dæmon of Vanity, a low under-strapper amongst us, held over his head a circle of gold, with five knobs on the top, and, whew! flew away with our prize in an instant.

Inv. Under-strapper! What, are there different ranks and orders amongst you?

Devil. Without doubt.

Inv. And, pray, sir—I hope no offence; but I would not be wanting in proper respect——are you, when at home, of condition? or how must I——

Devil. You mean, am I a devil of fashion, or one of the base born?

Inv. I do.

Devil. I have no reason to be ashamed of my family.

Inv. I don't doubt it. You will forgive me, if I make a mistake: Perhaps, my lord Lucifer?

Devil. Who?

Inv. Lord Lucifer?

Devil. Lord Lucifer! How little you know of our folks! Lucifer a lord! Why, that's the meanest rascal amongst us.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. Oh, a paltry mechanic! The very genius of jobbing! A mere bull and bear booby; the patron of lame ducks, brokers, and fraudulent bankrupts.

Inv. You amaze me! I vow I always thought him a principal agent.

Devil. He! not at all! The fellow, indeed, gave himself some airs of importance, upon following the camp, and having the contractors and commissaries under his care; but that affair, you know, closed with the war.

Inv. What, then, are they now entirely out of his hands?

Devil. Yes; quite out of his: he only suggested their cent. per cent. squeezings, and prompted the various modes of extortion and rapine: but, in his room, they have six or seven dæmons apiece, to direct the dissipation of their ill-gotten wealth.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. Poor Lucifer, it is all over with him! if it were not for the fluctuation of India, an occasional lottery, or a contested election, the alley would be empty, and Lucifer have as little to do as a pickpocket when the play-houses are shut.

Inv. Perhaps, sir, then your name may be Belzebub?

Devil. He! worse and worse! not a devil, that has the least regard to his character, would choose to be seen in his company: besides, it is the most petulant, waspish, quarrelsome cur——but no wonder; he is the imp of chicane, and protects the rotten part of the law.

Inv. Then he, at least, has employment enough?

Devil. Yes, during the term, he has a good deal to do: he is the parent of quibbles, the guardian of pettifoggers, bad bail, and of bailiffs; the supporter of alibi's, the source of sham pleas, the maker and finder of flaws, the patron of perjury, and a sworn foe to all trials by jury! Not long ago, though, my gentleman was put to his shifts.

Inv. How was that?

Devil. The law had laid hold of an old friend of his, for being too positive as to a matter of fact; evidence, evasion, protraction, pleas, every art, was employed to acquit him, that the most consummate skill could suggest; but all to no purpose.

Inv. That was strange.

Devil. Beyond all belief; he could have hanged a dozen innocent people with half the pains that this paltry perjury gave him.

Inv. How came that about?

Devil. Why, I don't know; he had unfortunately to do with an obstinate magistrate, who bears a mortal hatred to rogues, and whose sagacity could not be deceived. But, however,

though he was not able to save his friend from the shame of conviction (a trifle, which he, indeed, but little regarded), yet he had the address to evade, or at least defer, the time of his punishment.

Inv. By what means?

Devil. By finding a flaw.

Inv. A flaw! What's a flaw?

Devil. A legal loop-hole, that the lawyer's leave open for a rogue now and then to creep through, that the game mayn't be wholly destroyed.

Inv. A provident sportsman! Would it not be too much trouble to favour me with this particular instance?

Devil. Not at all. Why, sir, when matters grew desperate, and the case was given over for lost, little Belzy starts up in the form of an able practitioner, and humbly conceived, that his client could not be convicted upon that indictment; forasmuch as therein he was charged with forswearing himself now; whereas it clearly appeared, by the evidence, that he had only forsworn himself then: if, indeed, he had been indicted generally, for committing perjury now and then, proofs might be produced of any perjury he may have committed; whereas, by limiting the point of time to the now, no proofs could be admitted as to the then: so that, with submission, he humbly conceived his client was clearly absolved, and his character as fair and as spotless as a babe that's just born, and immaculate as a sheet of white paper.

Inv. And the objection was good?

Devil. Fatai; there was no getting rid of the flaw.

Inv. And the gentleman——

Devil. Walks about at his ease; not a public place, but he thrusts his person full in your face.

Inv. That ought not to be: the contempt of the public, that necessary supplement to the best digested body of laws, should, in these cases, be never dispensed with.

Devil. In days of yore, when the world was but young, that method had merit, and the sense of shame was a kind of a curb; but knaves are now so numerous and wealthy, they can keep one another in countenance, and laugh at the rest of the world.

Inv. There may be something in that. Well, sir, I have twice been out of my guess; will you give me leave to hazard a third? Perhaps you are Belphegor, or Uriel?

Devil. Neither. They, too, are but diminutive devils: the first favours the petty, pilfering frauds; he may be traced in the double score, and soaped pot of the publican, the allum and chalk of the baker, in the sophisticated mixtures of the brewers of wine and of beer, and in the false measures and weights of them all.

Inv. And Uriel?

Devil. He is the dæmon of quacks and of mountebanks; a thriving race all over the world, but their true seat of empire is England: there, a short sword, a tye, and a nostrum, a month's advertising, with a shower of handbills, never fail of creating a fortune. But of this tribe I foresee I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

Inv. Well, but, sir——

Devil. Come, sir, I will put an end to your pain; for, from my appearance, it is impossible you should ever guess at my person. Now, miss, what think you of Cupid?

Har. You? You Cupid? You the gay god of love?

Devil. Yes; me, me, miss! What, I suppose you expected the quiver at my back, and the bow in my hand; the purple pinions, and filleted forehead; with the blooming graces of youth and of beauty?

Har. Why, I can't but say the poets had taught me to expect charms——

Devil. That never existed but in the fire of their fancy; all fiction and phrenzy!

Inv. Then, perhaps, sir, these creative gentlemen may err as much in your office, as it is clear they have mistaken your person.

Devil. Why, their notions of me are but narrow. It is true, I do a little business in the amorous way; but my dealings are of a different kind to those they describe. My province lies in forming conjunctions absurd and preposterous: it is I that couple boys and beldames, girls and greybeards, together; and when you see a man of fashion locked in legitimate wedlock with the stale leavings of half the fellows in town, or a lady of fortune setting out for Edinburgh in a post-chaise with her footman, you may always set it down as some of my handywork. But this is but an inconsiderable branch of my business.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. The several arts of the drama, dancing, music, and painting, owe their existence to me: I am the father of fashions, the inventor of quints, trente, quarante, and hazard; the guardian of gamesters, the genius of gluttony, and the author, protector, and patron of licentiousness, lewdness, and luxury.

Inv. Your department is large.

Devil. One time or other, I may give you a more minute account of these matters; at present we have not a moment to lose: should my tyrant return, I must expect to be again corked up in a bottle.—[*Knocking.*]—And hark! it is the consul, that knocks at the door; therefore be quick! how can I serve you?

Inv. You are no stranger, sir, to our distress: Here, we are unprotected and friendless; could your art convey us to the place of our birth—

Devil. To England?

Inv. If you please.

Devil. Without danger, and with great expedition. Come to this window, and lay hold of my cloak. I have often resided in England: at

present, indeed, there are but few of our family there. Every seventh year, we have a general dispensation for residence; for, at that time, the inhabitants themselves can play the devil, without our aid or assistance. Off we go! stick fast to your hold!

[*Thunder. Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Street in London.*

Enter DEVIL, INVOICE, *and* HARRIET.

Devil. WELL, my good friends, I hope you are not displeased with your journey?

Inv. We had no time to be tired.

Har. No vehicle was ever so easy.

Devil. Then, by you mortals what injustice is done us, when every crazy, creeking, jolting, jumbling coach, is called the devil of a carriage?

Inv. Very true.

Devil. Oh, amongst you, we are horridly used. Well, sir, you now see I am a devil of honour, and have punctually obeyed your commands: but I shan't limit my gratitude to a literal compliance with our compact; is there any thing else for your service?

Inv. Were I not afraid to trespass too much on your time——

Devil. A truce to your compliments! Though they are the common change of the world, we know of what base metal the coin is composed, and have cried down the currency: speak your wishes at once.

Inv. England, sir, is our country, it is true; but Miss Maxwell being born abroad, and my leaving it young, have made us both as much strangers to its manners and customs, as if you had set us down at Ispahan or Delhi: give us, then, some little knowledge of the people with whom we are to live.

Devil. That task, young gentleman, is too much even for the devil himself! Where liberty reigns, and property is pretty equally spread, independence and pride will give each individual a peculiar and separate character: when classed in professions, indeed, they then wear some singular marks, that distinguish them from the rest of their race; these it may be necessary for you to know.

Inv. You will highly oblige me.

Devil. And at the same time that I am showing you persons, I will give you some little light into things. Health and property, you know, are the two important objects of human attention: You shall first see their state and situation in London.

Inv. You mean the practice of physic and law?

Devil. I do. And as to the first, you will find it, in some of the professors, a science, noble, salutary, and liberal; in others, a trade, as mean as it is mercenary; a contemptible combination of dunces, nurses, and apothecaries. But you have now a lucky opportunity of knowing more in an hour, of the great improvements in this branch of civil society, than, by any other means, seven years could have taught you.

In. Explain, if you please.

Devil. The spirit of discord prevails: The republic of tied periwigs, like the Romans of old, have turned their arms from the rest of mankind, to draw their short swords on themselves.

In. But how came this about?

Devil. To carry on the metaphor, you must know, in this great town, there are two corps of these troops, equally numerous, and equally formidable: The first, it is true, are disciplined, and fight under a general, whom they christen a President: The second contains the hussars and pandours of physic; they rarely attack a patient together; not but the latter, single-handed, can do good execution.

In. But their cause of contention?

Devil. Pride. The light troops are jealous of some honours the others possess by prescription, and, though but a militia, think they have right to an equal rank with the regulars.

In. Why, this in time may ruin their state.

Devil. True; but that we must prevent; it is our interest to make up this breach: Already we feel the fatal effects of their feuds: By neglecting their patients, the weekly bills daily decline, and new subjects begin to grow scarce in our realms.

In. This does, indeed, claim your attention.

Devil. We purpose to call in the aid of the law; bleeding the purse is as effectual for damping the spirit, as opening a vein for lowering the pulse. The Dæmon of Litigation has already possessed the licentiates; I must infuse the same passion into the president; and, I warrant you, in two or three terms, with two or three trials, all sides will be heartily tired. But apropos! I see a brace of apothecaries coming this way; they seem deep in debate: Let us listen; we shall best learn from them the present posture of----Hush, hide!----You shall here, too, have a proof what a Proteus I am.

[*They retire.*

Enter JULEP *and* APOZEM, *with a letter.*

Jul. I tell you, Apozem, you are but young in the business, and don't foresee how much we shall be all hurt in the end.

Apo. Well, but what can be done, Mr Julep?

Here, Dr Hellebore writes me word, that they threaten a siege, and are provided with fire-arms: would you have them surrender the college at once?

Jul. Fire-arms! if they are mad enough not to know that the pen is the doctor's best pistol, why, let them proceed.

Apo. But are we to stand quietly by, and see the very seat of the science demolished and torn?

Jul. And with what arms are we to defend it? where are our cannon? We have mortars, indeed, but then they are fit to hold nothing but pestles; and, as to our small arms, of what use can they be in a siege? they are made, you know, to attack only the rear.

Apo. Come, come, Mr Julep, you make too light of these matters: to have the lawful descendants from Galen, the throne of Esculapius, overturned by a parcel of Goths!

Jul. Peace, Apozem, or treat your betters with proper respect! What, numskull! do you think all physicians are blockheads, who have not washed their hands in the Cam or the Isis?

Apo. Well, but I hope you will allow that a university-doctor——

Jul. May, for aught you know, be a dunce. Besides, fool, what have we to do with degrees? the doctor that doses best is the best doctor for us. You talk of the college; there are some of their names, I am sure, that I never desire to see on my file.

Apo. Indeed!

Jul. Indeed? no, indeed. Why, there's Dr Diet, that makes such a dust: He had a person of fashion, a patient of mine, under his care t'other day; as fine a slow fever! I was in hopes of half making my fortune——

Apo. Yes; I love a slow fever. Was it nervous?

Jul. Ay; with a lovely dejection of spirits.

Apo. That was delightful, indeed! I look upon the nerves and the bile to be the two best friends we have to our back.—Well, pray, and how did it answer?

Jul. Not at all; the scoundrel let him slip through my hands for a song; only a paltry six pounds and a crown.

Apo. Shameful!

Jul. Infamous! and yet, forsooth, he was one of your college. Well, now, to shew you the difference in men; but the very week after, Dr Linctus, from Leyden, run me up a bill of thirty odd pounds, for only attending Alderman Soakpot six days in a surfeit.

Apo. Ay, that was doing of business.

Jul. Ah! that's a sweet pretty practitioner, Apozem! we must all do our utmost to push him.

Apo. Without doubt. But, notwithstanding all that you say, Mr Julep, there are some of the gentlemen of the college, that I know——

Jul. Ah! as fine fellows as ever fingered a pulse; not one in the trade will deny it.

Apo. But, amongst all now, old Nat Nightshade is the man for my money.

Jul. Yes; Nat, Nat has merit, I own; but, pot take him! he is so devilish quick: To be sure, he has a very pretty fluent pen whilst it lasts; but then he makes such dispatch, that one has hardly time to send in two dozen of draughts.

Apo. Yes; the doctor drives on, to be sure.

Jul. Drives on! If I am at all free in the house when old Nightshade is sent for, as a preparatory dose I always recommend an attorney.

Apo. An attorney! for what?

Jul. To make the patient's will, before he swallows the doctor's prescription.

Apo. That is prudent.

Jul. Yes; I generally afterwards get the thanks of the family.

Apo. What, Mr Julep, for the attorney, or the physician? ha, ha!

Jul. Ha, ha! you are arch, little Apozem; quite a wag, I profess!

Apo. Why, you know, brother Julep, these are subjects upon which one can hardly be serious.

Jul. True, true! but then you should never laugh loud in the street! We may indulge, indeed, a kind of simpering smile to our patients, as we drive by in our chariots; but, then, there is a decency, not to say dignity, that becomes the public demeanour of us, who belong to the faculty.

Apo. True! And yet, there are times when one can hardly forbear: Why, the other day now, I had like to have burst: I was following a funeral into St George's——a sweet pretty burying; velvet pall, hat-band and gloves; and, indeed, the widow was quite handsome in all things; paid my bill the next week, without sconcing off sixpence, though they were thought to have lived happily together—but, as I was a-saying, as we were entering the church, who should stand in the porch but Kit Cabbage the tailor, with a new pair of breeches under his arm. The sly rogue made me a bow, 'Servant, 'Master Apozem!' says he; 'what, you are car-'rying home your work, too, I see.' Did you ever hear such a dog?

Jul. Ay, ay; let them, let them———But, is not that Dr Squib, that is crossing the way?

Apo. Yes; you may see it is Squib, by his shuffle. What, I suppose now he is scouring away for the college.

Jul. Who, Squib? how little you know of him! he did not care if all our tribe was tipped into the Thames.

Apo. No!

Jul. No! Lord help you! he is too much taken up with the national illness, to attend to particular ails: Why, he would quit the best patient in town to hunt after a political secret;

and would rather have a whisper from a great man in the Court of Requests, than five hundred pounds for attending him in a chronical case.

Apo. Wonderful! Who can that dirty boy be, that he has in his hand?

Jul. One of his scouts, I suppose. We shall see.

Re-enter DEVIL, *as* DR SQUIB, *and* PRINTER'S DEVIL.

Squib. And you are sure this was worked off one of the first?

Boy. Not a single one, sir, has been sent out as yet.

Squib. That is daintily done, my dear devil! Here, child, here's sixpence. When your master gives you the rest, you need not be in haste to deliver them, but step into the first public-house to refresh you.

Boy. I shall, sir.

Squib. By that means, I shall be earliest to treat two or three great men that I know with the sight.

Boy. No further commands, sir?

Squib. None, child! But, d'ye hear? if you you can at any time get me the rough reading of any tart political manuscript, before it goes to press, you shan't be a loser.

Boy. I shall try, sir.

Squib. That's well! Mind your business, and go on but as you begin, and I foresee your fortune is made: Come, who knows but in a little time, if you are a good boy, you may get yourself committed to Newgate!

Boy. Ah, sir, I am afraid I am too young!

Squib. Not at all: I have seen lads in limbo much younger than you. Come, don't be faint-hearted; there has many a printer been raised to the pillory from as slender beginnings.

Boy. That's great comfort, however. Well, sir, I'll do my endeavour.

[*Exit.*

Squib. Do, do! What, Apozem! Julep! Well encountered, my lads! You are a couple of lucky rogues! Here, here's a treat for a prince; such a print, boys! just fresh from the plate:—Feel it; so wet, you may wring it.

Jul. And pray, good doctor, what is the subject?

Squib. Subject! Gad take me, a trimmer!—this will make some folks that we know look about them. Hey, Julep, don't you think this will sting?

Jul. I profess I don't understand it.

Squib. No? Why, zounds, it is as plain as a pike-staff; in your own way, too, you blockhead! Can't you see? Read, read the title, you rogue! But, perhaps, you can't, without spectacles. Let me see! ay, 'The State-Quacks; or, Britannia a-dying;' You take it?

Jul. Very well.

Squib. There you see her stretched along on a pallet; you may know she is Britannia, by the shield and spear at the head of her bed.

Apo. Very plain: for all the world like the wrong side of a half-penny!

Squib. Well said, little Apozem! you have discernment, I see. Her disease is a lethargy; you see how sick she is, by holding her hand to her head; don't you see that?

Jul. I do, I do!

Squib. Well, then, look at that figure there upon her left hand.

Jul. Which?

Squib. Why, he that holds a draught to her mouth.

Jul. What, the man with the phial?

Squib. Ay, he with the phial: That is supposed to be—[*Whispers.*] offering her laudanum, to lull her faster asleep.

Jul. Laudanum! A noble medicine, when administered properly. I remember once in a locked jaw——

Squib. Damn your locked jaw! hold your prating, you puppy! I wish your jaws were locked! Pox take him, I have forgot what I was going to!—Apozem, where did I leave off?

Apo. You left off at faster asleep.

Squib. True! I was faster asleep. Well, then, you see that thin figure there, with the meagre chaps; he with the straw in his hand?

Apo. Very plain.

Squib. He is supposed to be—[*Whispers.*]—— You take me?

Jul. Ay, ay!

Squib. Who rouses Britannia, by tickling her nose with that straw; she starts, and, with a jerk—[*Starting, strikes* JULEP.] I beg pardon! and with a jerk, knocks the bottle of laudanum out of his hand; and so, by that there means, you see, Britannia is delivered from death.

Jul. Ay, ay!

Squib. Hey! you swallow the satire? Pretty bitter, I think?

Jul. I can't say that I quite understand—— that is—a—a——

Squib. Not understand! then, what a fool am I to throw my time on a dunce! I shall miss, too, the reading the new pamphlet in Red-Lion-Square; and at six I must be at Serjeants-Inn, to justify bail for a couple of journeymen printers.

Apo. But, Dr Squib, you seem to have forgot the case of the college, your brethren?

Squib. I have no time to attend their trifling squabbles! The nation, the nation, Mr Apozem, engrosses my care. The college! could they but get me a stiptic to stop the bleeding wounds of my—it is there, there, that I feel! Oh, Julep, Apozem!

Could they but cast the water of this land,

Purge her gross humours, purify her blood,
And give her back her pristine health again,
I would applaud them to the very echo
That should applaud again!

Jul. Indeed, Dr Squib, that I believe is out of the way of the college.

Squib. Throw physic to the dogs, then! I'll have none of't.

But tell me, Apozem, inform me, Julep,
What senna, rhubarb, or what purgative drug,
Can scour these—hence?

You understand me, lads?

Jul. In good truth, not I, sir!

Squib. No! then so much the better! I warrant little Pozy does. Well, adieu my brave boys! for I have not an instant to lose. Not understand me, hey? Apozem, you do, you rogue? What senna, rhubarb, or—hey—can scour these Sc——Egad, I had like to have gone too far! Well, bye, bye, bye!

[*Exit* SQUIB.

Jul. Why the poor man seems out of his senses!

Apo. When he talked of throwing physic to the dogs, I confess I began to suspect him. But we shall be late; we must attend our summons, you know.

Jul. Throw physic to the dogs! I can tell thee, Apozem, if he does not get cured of these fancies and freaks, he is more likely to go to the kennel by half. Throw physic to the dogs! an impertinent ignorant puppy!

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter DEVIL, INVOICE, *and* HARRIET.

Devil. Well, I think chance has thrown a pretty good sample into your way. Now, if I could but get one to conduct you—But stay, who have we here?

Enter LAST, *with a pair of shoes.*

Last. Pray, good gentleman, can you tell a body which is the ready road to find Warwick-lane?

Devil. Warwick-lane, friend! and, prithee, what can thy errand be there?

Last. I am going there, to take out a licence to make me a doctor, an like your worship.

Devil. Where do you live?

Last. A little way off in the country.

Devil. Your name, honest friend, and your business?

Last. My name, master, is Last; by trade, I am a doctor, and, by profession, a maker of shoes: I was born to the one, and bred up to the other.

Devil. Born! I don't understand you!

Last. Why, I am a seventh son, and so were my father.

Devil. Oh, a very clear title! And pray, now, in which branch does your skill chiefly lie?

Last. By casting a water, I cure the jaundarse; I taps folks for a tenpenny; and have a choice charm for the agar; and, over and above that, master, I bleeds.

Devil. Bleeds! and are your neighbours so bold as to trust you?

Last. Trust me! ay, master, that they will, sooner than narra a man in the country. Mayhap, you may know Dr Tyth'em, our rector, at home?

Devil. I can't say that I do.

Last. He's the flower of a man in the pulpit. Why, t'other day, you must know, taking a turn in his garden, and thinking of nothing at all, down falls the doctor flat in a fit of perplexity: Madam Tyth'em, believing her husband was dead, directly sent the sexton for I.

Devil. An affectionate wife!

Last. Yes; they are a main happy couple.—Sure as a gun, master, when I comed, his face was as black as his cassock: but, howsomdever, I took out my lancelot, and forthwith opened a large artifice here in one of the juglers. The doctor bled like a pig.

Devil. I dare say.

Last. But it did the business, howsomdever; I compassed the job.

Devil. What, he recovered?

Last. Recovered? Lord help you! why, but last Sunday was se'ennight—to be sure, the doctor is given to weeze a little, because why, he is main opulent, and apt to be tisicky—but he composed as sweet a discourse—I slept from beginning to end.

Devil. That was composing, indeed!

Last. Ay, warn't it, master, for a man that is strucken in years?

Devil. Oh, a wonderful effort!

Last. Well, like your worship, and, besides all this I have been telling you, I have a pretty tight hand at a tooth.

Devil. Indeed!

Last. Ay; and I'll say a bold word, that, in drawing a thousand, I never stumpt a man in my life: Now, let your Rusperni's, and all your foreign mounseers, with their fine dainty freeches, say the like if they can.

Devil. I defy them.

Last. So you may. Then, about a dozen years ago, before these here Suttons made such a noise, I had some thoughts of occupying for the small-pox.

Devil. Ay; that would have wound up your bottom at once. And, why did not you?

Last. Why, I don't know, master; the neighbours were frightful, and would not consent: otherwise, by this time, 'tis my belief, men, wo-

men, and children, I might have occupied twenty thousand at last.

Devil. Upon my word! But, you say a dozen years, Master Last? As you have practised physic without permission so long, what makes you now think of getting a licence?

Last. Why, it is all along with one Lotion, a pottercarrier, that lives in a little town hard by we; he is grown old and lascivious, I think, and threatens to present me at size, if so be I practise any longer.

Devil. What, I suppose you run away with the business?

Last. Right, master! you have guessed the matter at once. So, I was telling my tale to Sawney M'Gregor, who comes now and then to our town, with his pack; God, he advised me to get made a doctor at once, and send for a diplummy from Scotland.

Devil. Why, that was the right road, Master Last.

Last. True! But my Master Tyth'em tells me, that I can get it done for pretty near the same price here in London; so I had rather, d'ye see, lay out my money at home, than transport it to foreign parts, as we say; because why, master, I thinks there has too much already gone that road.

Devil. Spoke like an Englishman!

Last. I have a pair of shoes here, to carry home to farmer Fallow's son, that lives with Master Grogram, the mercer, hard by here, in Cheapside; so I thought I might as well do both businesses under one.

Devil. True! Your way, Master Last, lies before you; the second street, you must turn to the left; then, enter the first great gate that you see.

Last. And who must I aks for?

Devil. Oh, pull out your purse; you will find that hint sufficient: It is a part of the world where a fee is never refused.

Last. Thank you, master! You are main kind; very civil, indeed! [*Going, returns.*] I wish, master, you had now either the agar or jaundarse; I would set you right in a trice.

Devil. Thank you, Master Last! but I am as well as I am.

Last. Or, if so be you likes to open a vein, or would have a tooth or two knocked out of your head, I'll do it for nothing.

Devil. Not at present, I thank you! when I want, I'll call at your house in the country. [*Exit* LAST.] Well, my young couple, and what say you now?

In. Say, sir! that I am more afraid of being sick, than ever I was in my life.

Devil. Pho! you know nothing as yet. But my time draws nigh for possessing the president; If I could but get some intelligent person, to conduct you to the place where the licentiates assemble—There seems a sober, sedate-looking lad; perhaps, he may answer our purpose.—— Hark'ee, youn, man?

Enter JOHNY MACPHERSON.

Mac. What's your wul, sir? would you spear aught wi' me?

Devil. Though I think I can give a good guess, pray, from what part of the world may you come?

Mac. My name is Johney Macpherson, and I came out of the north.

Devil. Are you in business at present?

Mac. I canna say that, sir, nor that I am inteerely dastitute neither; but I sall be unco glad to get a mair solid establishment.

Devil. Have you been long in this town?

Mac. Aboot a month awa, sir: I launded fra Leith, in the guide ship the Traquair, Davy Donaldson, maister, and am lodged with Sawney Sinclair, at the sign o' the city of Glascow, not far fra the Monument.

Devil. But you are in employment?

Mac. Ay, for some part of the day.

Devil. And to what may your profits amount?

Mac. Ah, for the matter of that, it is a pratty smart little income.

Devil. Is it a secret how much?

Mac. Not at aw; I get three-pence an hour for larning Latin to a physician in the ceety.

Devil. The very man that we want. Latin! and, what, are you capable?

Mac. Cappable! Hut awa, mon! Ken ye, that I was heed of the humanity-class for mair than a twalvemonth? and was offered the chair of the grammatical professorship in the colledge, which amunts to a matter of sax pounds British a year.

Devil. That's more than I knew. Can you guess, sir, where your scholar is now!

Mac. It is na long, sir, that I laft him conning his *As in præsenti*; after which, he talked of ganging to meet some friends o' the faculty, aboot a sort of a squabble, that he says is sprang up amang them; he wanted me to gang alang wi' him, as I had gi'n mysel to study madicine a little before I quitted the north.

Devil. Do you know the public-house where they meet?

Mac. Yes, yes; unco weel, sir; it is at the tavern the south side of Paul's Kirk.

Devil. Will you take the trouble to conduct this young couple thither? they will amply reward you. You and your partner will follow this lad. Fear nothing! by my art, you are invisible to all but those that you desire should see you.——At the college we shall rejoin one a-

nother:——for thither the licentiates will lead you.

In. But how shall we be able to distinguish you from the rest of the fellows?

Devil. By my large wig, and superior importance; in a word, you must look for me in the PRESIDENT.

In. Adieu! [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

FINGERFEE, SLIGO, OSASAFRAS, BROADRIM, *other Doctors, and* MACPHERSON, *discovered.*

Fin. No; I can't help thinking this was by much the best method. If, indeed, they refuse us an amicable entrance, we are then justified in the use of corrosives.

Sligo. I tell you, Dr Fingerfee—I am sorry, d'ye see, to differ from so old a practitioner—— but I don't like your prescription at all, at all; For, what signifies a palliative regimen, with such a rotten constitution! May I never finger a pulse as long as I live, if you get their voluntary consent to go in, unless, indeed, it be by compulsion.

Osas. I entirely coincide with my very capable countryman, Dr Sligo, d'ye see; and do give my advice, in this consultation, for putting the whole college under a course of steel without further delay.

Sli. I am much obligated to you for your kind compliment, doctor. But, pray, what may your name be?

Osas. Dr Osasafras, at your humble service.

Sli. I am your very obadient alsho! I have heard tell of your name. But what did you mane by my countryman? Pray, doctor, of what nation are you?

Osas. Sir, I have the honour to be a native of Ireland.

Sli. Osasafras? that's a name of no note; he is not a Melisian, I am sure. The family, I suppose, came over t'other day with Strongbow, not above seven or eight hundred years ago; or, perhaps, a descendant from one of Oliver's drummers—'Pon my conscience, doctor, I should hardly belave you were Irish!

Osas. What, sir, d'ye doubt my veracity?

Sli. Not at all, my dear doctor! it is not for that: but, between me and yourself, you have lived a long time in this town.

Osas. Like enough.

Sli. Ay! and was here a great while before ever I saw it.

Osas. What of that?

Sli. Very well, my dear doctor! Then, putting that and t'other together, my notion of the upshot is, that if so be you are a native of Ireland, upon my conscience, you must have been born there very young.

Osas. Young? ay, to be sure! Why, my soul, I was christened there.

Sli. Ay!

Osas. Ay was I, in the county of Meath.

Sli. Oh, that alters the property! that makes it as clear as Fleet-Ditch. I should be glad, countryman, of your nearer acquaintance. But what little slim doctor is that, in his own head of hair? I don't recollect to have seen his features before.

Osas. Nor I, to my knowledge.

Sli. Perhaps, he may be able to tell me, if I aks him himself. I am proud to see you, doctor, on this occasion; because why, it becomes every jontleman that is of the faculty—that is, that is not of their faculty, you understand me? to look about him and stir.

Mac. Oh, by my troth, you are right, sir! The leemiting of physic aw to ae hoose, caw it a college, or by what denomination you wul, it is at best but establishing a sort of monopoly.

Sli. 'Pon my conscience, that is a fine observation. By the twist of your tongue, doctor, (no offence) I should be apt to guess that you might be a foreigner born.

Mac. Sirr!

Sli. From Russia, perhaps, or Muscovy?

Mac. Hut awa, mon! not at aw! Zounds, I am a Breeton!

Sli. Then, I should suppose, doctor, pretty far to the northward?

Mac. Ay; you are right, sir.

Sli. And pray, doctor, what particular branch of our business may have taken up the most of your time?

Mac. Botany.

Sli. Botany! in what college?

Mac. The university of St Andrews.

Osas. Pray, doctor, is not botany a very dry sort of a study?

Sli. Most damnably so in those parts, my dear doctor; for all the knowledge they have, they must get from dried herbs, because the devil of any green that will grow there.

Mac. Sir, your information is wrang.

Sli. Come, my dear doctor, hold your palaver, and don't be after puffing on us; because why, you know in your conscience that in your part of the world you get no cabbage but thistles; and those you are obliged to raise upon hotbeds.

Mac. Thistles! zounds, sir, d'ye mean to affront me?

Sli. That, doctor, is as you plaases to take it.

Mac. God's life, sir, I would ha' you to ken, that there is narra a mon wi' his heed upon his shoulders that dare——

Fin. Peace, peace, gentlemen! let us have a

civil discord. Doctor Sligo is a lover of pleasantry; but, I am sure, had no design to affront you: A joke, nothing else.

Mac. A joke! ah; I like a joke weel enough; but I did na understand the doctor's gibing and jeering: Perhaps my wut may not be aw together as sharp as the doctor's, but I have a sword, sir——

Sli. A sword, sir!

Fin. A sword! ay, ay; there is no doubt you have both very good ones; but reserve them for —Oh! here comes our ambassador.

Enter DYACHYLON.

Well, Dr Dyachylon, what news from the college? will they allow us free ingress and egress?

Dyac. I could not get them to swallow a single demand.

All. No?

Sli. Then let us drive there, and drench them.

Dyac. I was heard with disdain, and refused with an air of defiance.

Sli. There, gentlemen! I foretold you what would happen at first.

All. He did, he did!

Sli. Then we have nothing for it but to force our passage at once.

All. By all means; let us march!

Broad. Friend Fingerfee, would our brethren but incline their ears to me for a minute—

Fin. Gentlemen, Dr Broadbrim desires to be heard.

All. Hear him, hear him!

Sli. Paw, honey, what signifies hearing? I long to be doing, my jewel!

Fin. But hear Dr Melchisedech Broadbrim, however.

All. Ay, ay; hear Dr Broadbrim!

Broad. Fellow-labourers in the same vineyard! ye know well how much I stand inclined to our cause; forasmuch as not one of my brethren can be more zealous than I——

All. True, true.

Broad. But ye wot also that I hold it not meet or wholesome to use carnal weapon, even for the defence of myself; much more unseemly, then, must I deem it, to draw the sword for the offending of others.

Sli. Paw! brother doctors; don't let him bother us with his yea and nay nonsense!

Broad. Friend Sligo, do not be choleric; and know, that I am as free to draw my purse, in this cause, as thou art thy sword; And thou wilt find, at the length, notwithstanding thy swaggering, that the first will do us best service.

Sli. Well, but——

All. Hear him, hear him!

Broad. It is my motion, then, brethren, that we do forthwith send for a sinful man in the flesh, called an attorney.

Sli. An attorney!

Broad. Ay, an attorney; and that we do direct him to take out a parchment instrument, with a seal fixed thereto.

Sli. Paw, pox! what good can that do?

Broad. Don't be too hasty, friend Sligo. And therewith, I say, let him possess the outward tabernacle of the vain man, who delighteth to call himself president, and carry him before the men clothed in lambskin, who, at Westminster, are now sitting in judgment.

Sli. Paw! a law-suit! that won't end with our lives. Let us march!

All. Ay, ay.

Sli. Come, Dr Habakkuk, will you march in the front or the rear?

Hab. Pardon me, doctor! I cannot attend you.

Sli. What, d'ye draw back when it comes to the push?

Hab. Not at all; I would gladly join in putting these Philistines to flight; for I abhor them worse than hog's puddings, in which the unclean beast and the blood are all jumbled together.

Sli. Pretty food, for all that.

Hab. But this is Saturday; and I dare not draw my sword on the Sabbath.

Sli. Then stay with your brother Melchisedech; for, though of different religions, you are both of a kidney. Come, doctors; out with your swords! Huzza! and now for the lane! Huzza!

[*Exeunt.*

Broad. Friend Habakkuk, thou seest how headstrong and wilful these men are; but let us use discretion, however. Wilt thou step to the inn that taketh its name from the city of Lincoln? enquire there for a man, with a red rag at his back, a small black cap on his pate, and a bushel of hair on his breast? I think they call him a serjeant.

Hab. They do.

Broad. Then, without let or delay, bring him hither, I pray thee.

Hab. I will about it this instant.

Broad. His admonition, perhaps, may prevail. Use dispatch, I beseech thee, friend Habakkuk.

Hab. As much as if I was posting to the Treasury, to obtain a large subscription in a new loan, or a lottery.

Broad. Nay, then, friend, I have no reason to fear thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The College.*

DEVIL, [*as* HELLEBORE, *the President.*] CAMPHIRE, CALOMEL, *Secretary, and Pupils, discovered.*

Sec. The Licentiates, sir, will soon be at hand.

Hel. Let them!

Cal. We will do our duty, however; and, like the patricians of old, receive with silence these Visigoths in the senate.

Hel. I am not, Dr Calomel, of so pacific a

turn. Let us keep the evil out of doors, if we can: if not, *vim vi*, repel force by force—Barricado the gates!

Sec. It is done.

Hel. Are the buckets and fire-engine fetched from St. Dunstan's?

Sec. They have been here, sir, this half-hour.

Hel. Let twelve apothecaries be placed at the pump, and their apprentices supply them with water.

Sec. Yes, sir.

Hel. But let the engine be played by old Jollup, from James-street. Not one of the trade has a better hand at directing a pipe.

Sec. Mighty well, sir.

Hel. In the time of siege, every citizen ought in duty to serve. Having thus, brothers, provided a proper defence, let us coolly proceed to our business. Is there any body here, to demand a licence to-day?

Sec. A practitioner, Mr President, out of the country.

Hel. Are the customary fees all discharged?

Sec. All, sir.

Hel. Then let our censors, Dr Christopher Camphire, and Dr Cornelius Calomel, introduce the practitioner for examination.

[*Exeunt* CAMPHIRE *and* CALOMEL. After this duty is dispatched, we will then read the college and students a lecture.

Enter CAMPHIRE *and* CALOMEL, *with* LAST.

Last. First, let me lay down my shoes.

[*They advance, with three bows, to the table.*

Hel. Let the candidate be placed on a stool. What's the doctor's name?

Sec. Emanuel Last, Mr President.

Hel. Dr Last, you have petitioned the college, to obtain a licence for the practice of physic; and though we have no doubt of your great skill and abilities, yet our duty compels us previously to ask a few questions: What academy had the honour to form you.

Last. Anan?

Hel. We want to know the name of the place where you have studied the science of physic?

Last. Dunstable.

Hel. That's some German university; so he can never belong to the College.

All. Never; oh, no!

Hel. Now, sir, with regard to your physiological knowledge. By what means, Dr Last, do you discover that a man is not well?

Last. By his complaint that he is ill.

Hel. Well replied! no surer prognostic.

All. None surer.

Hel. Then, as to recovering a subject that is ill—Can you venture to undertake the cure of an ague?

Last. With arra a man in the country.

Hel. By what means?

Last. By a charm.

Hel. And pray, of what materials may that charm be composed?

Last. I won't tell; 'tis a secret.

Hel. Well replied! the college has no right to pry into secrets.

All. Oh, no! by no means!

Hel. But now, Dr Last, to proceed in due form; are you qualified to administer remedies to such diseases as belong to the head?

Last. I believe I may.

Hel. Name some to the college.

Last. The tooth-ache.

Hel. What do you hold the best method to treat it?

Last. I pulls 'em up by the roots.

Hel. Well replied, brothers! that, without doubt, is a radical cure.

All. Without doubt.

Hel. Thus far as to the head: Proceed we next to the middle! When, Dr Last, you are called in to a patient with a pain in his bowels, what then is your method of practice?

Last. I claps a trencher hot to the part.

Hel. Embrocation; very well! But if this application should fail, what is the next step that you take?

Last. I gi's a vomit and a purge.

Hel. Well replied! for it is plain there is a disagreeable guest in the house; he has opened both doors; if he will go out at neither, it is none of his fault.

All. Oh, no! by no means!

Hel. We have now dispatched the middle, and head: Come we finally to the other extremity, the feet! Are you equally skilful in the disorders incidental to them?

Last. I believe I may.

Hel. Name some.

Last. I have a great vogue all our way for curing of corns.

Hel. What are the means that you use?

Last. I cuts them out.

Hel. Well replied! extirpation: No better method of curing can be. Well, brethren, I think we may now, after this strict and impartial inquiry, safely certify, that Dr Last, from top to toe, is an able physician.

All. Very able, very able, indeed!

Hel. And every way qualified to proceed in his practice.

All. Every way qualified.

Hel. You may descend, Dr Last. [LAST *takes his seat among them.*] Secretary, first read, and then give the doctor his licence.

Sec. [*Reads.*] 'To all whom these presents 'may come, greeting. Know ye, that, after a 'most strict and severe inquisition, not only into 'the great skill and erudition, but the morals of 'Dr Emanuel Last, We are authorised to grant 'unto the said doctor, full power, permission, 'and licence, to pill, bolus, lotion, potion, draught,

'dose, drench, purge, bleed, blister, clister, cup, 'scarify, syringe, salivate, couch, flux, sweat, 'diet, dilute, tap, plaster, and poultice, all per-'sons, in all diseases, of all ages, conditions, and 'sexes. And we do strictly command and enjoin 'all surgeons, apothecaries, with their apprenti-'ces, all midwives, male, female, and nurses, at 'all times, to be aiding and assisting to the said 'Dr Emanuel Last. And we do further charge 'all mayors, justices, aldermen, sheriffs, bailiffs, 'headboroughs, constables, and coroners, not to 'molest or intermeddle with the said doctor, if 'any party whom he shall pill, bolus, lotion, po-'tion, draught, dose, drench, purge, bleed, blis-'ter, clister, cup, scarify, syringe, salivate, couch, 'flux, sweat, diet, dilute, tap, plaster, and poul-'tice, should happen to die, but to deem that 'the said party died a natural death, any thing 'appearing to the contrary notwithstanding. 'Given under our hands, &c.' Hercules Helle-bore, Cornelius Calomel, Christopher Camphire.

Last. Then, if a patient die, they must not say that I killed him?

Hel. They say? Why, how should they know, when it is not one time in twenty that we know it ourselves?—Proceed we now to the lecture! [*They all rise, and come forward to the table.*] Brethren and students, I am going to open to you some notable discoveries that I have made, respecting the source, or primary cause, of all distempers incidental to the human machine: And these, brethren, I attribute to certain ani-malculæ, or piscatory entities, that insinuate themselves through the pores into the blood, and, in that fluid, sport, toss, and tumble about, like mackarel or cod-fish in the great deep: And, to convince you that this is not a mere *gratis dictum*, an hypothesis only, I will give you demonstrative proof. Bring hither the microscope!

Enter a Servant with microscope.

Doctor Last, regard this receiver. Take a peep.

Last. Where?

Hel. There. Those two yellow drops there, were drawn from a subject afflicted with the jaundice.—Well, what d'ye see!

Last. Some little creatures, like yellow flies, that are hopping and skipping about.

Hel. Right. Those yellow flies give the tinge to the skin, and undoubtedly cause the disease: And now for the cure! I administer to every pa-tient the two-and-fiftieth part of a scruple of the ovaria or eggs of the spider; these are thrown by the digestive powers into the secretory, there separated from the alimentary, and then preci-pitated into the circulatory; where, finding a proper nidus or nest, they quit their torpid state, and vivify, and upon vivification discerning the flies, their natural food, they immediately fall foul of them, extirpate the race out of the blood, and restore the patient to health.

Last. And what becomes of the spiders?

Hel. Oh, they die, you know, for want of nu-trition. Then I send the patient down to Bright-helmston; and a couple of dips in the salt water washes the cobwebs entirely out of the blood.—Now, gentlemen, with respect to the——

Enter Servant.

Ser. Sir, Mr Forceps, from the hospital.

Hel. The hospital! is this a time to——

Enter FORCEPS.

Well, Forceps, what's your will?

For. To know, sir, what you would have done with the hospital patients to-day?

Hel. To-day! why, what was done yester-day?

For. Sir, we bled the west ward, and jalloped the north.

Hel. Did ye? why then, bleed the north ward, and jallop the west, to day. [*Exit* FOR. Now, I say, brethren——

Enter Servant.

Ser. The licentiates are drawn up at the gate.

Hel. Who leads them?

Ser. They are led on by Sligo: They demand instant entrance, and threaten to storm.

Hel. Doctors Calomel and Camphire, our two aid-de-camps, survey their present posture, and report it to us.

[*Without.*] Huzza!

Hel. Bid old Jollup be ready to unmask the engine at the word of command.

Enter CAMPHIRE.

Now, Dr Camphire?

Cam. The sledge hammers are come, and they prepare to batter in breach.

Hel. Let the engine be played off at the very first blow! [*Exit* CAMP.

[*Without.*] Huzza!

Enter CALOMEL.

Now, doctor?

Cal. The first fire has demolished Dr Finger-fee's foretop.

Hel. That's well. [*Exit* CAL.

Enter CAMPHIRE.

Now, doctor?

Cam. The second fire has dropt the stiff buckles of Dr Ossasafras.

Hel. Better and better! [*Exit* CAMPHIRE.

Enter CALOMEL.

Now, doctor?

Cal. Both the knots of Dr Anodoyne's tye are dissolved.

Hel. Best of all! [*Exit* CALOMEL.

Enter CAMPHIRE.

Now, doctor?

Cam. As Dr Sligo, with open mouth, drove furiously on, he received a full stream in his teeth, and is retired from the field dropping wet.

Hel. Then the day's our own! [*Exit* CAMPHIRE.

Enter CALOMEL.

Now, doctor?

Cal. All is lost! Dr Sligo, recruited by a bumper of Drogheda, is returned with fresh vigour.

Hel. Let our whole force be pointed at him! [*Exit* CALOMEL.

Enter CAMPHIRE.

Now, doctor?

Cam. The siege slackens; Dr Broadbrim, with serjeant Demur, are arrived in the camp. [*Exit.*

Hel. What can that mean?

Enter CALOMEL.

Now, doctor?

Cal. Serjeant Demur has thrown this manifesto over the gate. [*Exit.*

Hel. [*Looking at the parchment.*] Ha! "Middlesex, to wit. John Doe, and Richard Roe." It is a challenge to meet them at Westminster-hall; then we have breathing-time till the term.

Enter LAST.

Now, doctor?

Last. I have forgot my shoes. [*Takes them up, and exit.*

Hel. Oh!

Enter CAMPHIRE.

Cam. The licentiates file off towards Fleet-street.

Hel. Follow all, and harass the rear! leave not a dry thread among them! Huzza! [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter DEVIL, INVOICE, *and* HARRIET.

Devil. Well, my young friends, you will naturally be led to Westm——Oh!

Inv. Bless me, sir, what's the matter? You change colour, and faulter.

Devil. The magician at Madrid has discovered my flight, and recals me by an irresistible spell: I must leave you, my friends!

Inv. Forbid it, fortune! it is now, sir, that we most want your aid.

Devil. He must, he will be obeyed. Hereafter, perhaps, I may rejoin you again.

Inv. But, sir, what can we do? how live? what plan can we fix on for our future support?

Devil. You are in a country where your talents, with a little application, will procure you a provision.

Inv. But which way to direct them?

Devil. There are profitable professions that require but little ability.

Inv. Name us one.

Devil. What think you of the trade, with whose badge I am at present invested?

Inv. Can you suppose, sir, after what I have seen——

Devil. Oh, sir, I don't design to engage you in any personal service; I would only recommend it to you to be the vender of those infallible remedies with which our newspapers are constantly crowded.

Inv. You know, sir, I am possessed of no secret.

Devil. Nor they either: A few simple waters, dignified with titles that catch, no matter how wild and absurd, will effectually answer your purpose: As, let me see now: Tincture of tinder, essence of eggshell, or balsam of broomstick.

Inv. You must excuse me, sir; I can never submit.

Devil. I think you are rather too squeamish. What say you, then, to a little spiritual quackery?

Inv. Spiritual?

Devil. Oh, sir, there are, in this town, mountebanks for the mind, as well as the body. How should you like mounting a cart on a common, and becoming a Methodist preacher?

Inv. Can that scheme turn to account?

Devil. Nothing better: Believe me, the absolute direction of the persons and purses of a large congregation, however low their conditions and callings, is by no means a contemptible object. I, for my own part, can say, what the conqueror of Persia said to the Cynic; "If I was not Alexander, I would be Diogenes:" So, if I was not the devil, I would chuse to be a Methodist preacher.

Inv. But then, the restraint, the forms, I shall be obliged to observe——

Devil. None at all: There is, in the whole catalogue, but one sin you need to be at all shy of committing.

Inv. What's that?

Devil. Simony.

Inv. Simony! I don't comprehend you.

Devil. Simony, sir, is a new kind of canon, devised by these upstart fanatics, that makes it sinful not to abuse the confidence, and piously plunder the little property, of an indigent man and his family.

Inv. A most noble piece of casuistical cookery!

and exceeds even the sons of Ignatius! But this honour I beg to decline.

Devil. What think you, then, of trying the stage? You are a couple of good theatrical figures; but how are your talents? can you sing?

Inv. I can't boast of much skill, sir; but Miss Harriet got great reputation in Spain.

Har. Oh, Mr Invoice!—My father, sir, as we seldom went out, established a domestic kind of drama, and made us perform some little musical pieces, that were occasionally sent us from England.

Devil. Come, sir, will you give us a taste of your—just a short—*te ti te tor?*

[*Sings a short preludio.*

Inv. I must beg to be excused, sir; I have not a musical note in my voice, that can please you.

Devil. No? Why, then, I believe we must trouble the lady: Come, miss, I'll charm a band to accompany you. [*Waves his stick.*—HARRIET *sings.*] Exceedingly well! You have nothing to do now, but to offer yourselves to one of the houses.

Inv. And which, sir, would you recommend?

Devil. Take your choice; for I can serve you in neither.

Inv. No? I thought, sir, you told me just now, that the several arts of the drama were under your direction.

Devil. So they were formerly; but now they are directed by the Genius of Insipidity: He has entered into partnership with the managers of both houses, and they have set up a kind of circulating library, for the vending of dialogue novels. I dare not go near the new house, for the dæmon of Power, who gave me this lameness, has possessed the pates, and sown discord among the mock monarchs there; and what one receives, the other rejects. And, as to the other house, the manager has great merit himself, with skill to discern, and candour to allow it in others; but I can be of no use in making your bargain, for in that he would be too many for the cunningest devil amongst us.

Inv. I have heard of a new playhouse in the Haymarket.

Devil. What, Foote's? Oh, that's an eccentric, narrow establishment; a mere summer-fly! He! But, however, it may do for a *coup d'essai*, and prove no bad foundation for a future engagement.

Inv. Then we will try him, if you please.

Devil. By all means: And you may do it this instant; he opens to-night, and will be glad of your assistance. I'll drop you down at the door; and must then take my leave for some time. *Allons!* but don't tremble; you have nothing to fear: The public will treat you with kindness; at least, if they shew but half the indulgence to you, that they have, upon all occasions, shewn to that manager.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

THE

PADLOCK.

BY

BICKERSTAFF.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN	WOMEN.
DON DIEGO, *guardian to* LEONORA.	LEONORA, *attached to* LEANDER.
LEANDER, *attached to* LEONORA.	URSULA, *an old duenna, attending* LEONORA
MUNGO, *servant to* DON DIEGO.	

Scene—Salamanca.

ACT. I.

SCENE I.—*A garden belonging to* DON DIEGO'S *house.*

Enter DON DIEGO *musing, followed by* URSULA.

Don Diego. THOUGHTS to council—let me see,
Hum—to be, or not to be
A husband, is the question:
A cuckold! must that follow?
Say what men will,
Wedlock's a pill,
Bitter to swallow,
And hard of digestion.

But fear makes the danger seem double.
Say, Hymen, what mischief can trouble
My peace, should I venture to try you?
My doors shall be lock'd,
My windows be block'd;
No male in my house,
Not so much as a mouse:
Then horns, horns, I defy you!

Don Diego. Ursula!

Ursula. Here, an't please your worship.

Don Diego. Where is Leonora?

Ursula. In her chamber, sir.

Don Diego. There is the key of it; there key of the best hall: there the key of the upon the first flight of stairs; there the ke the door upon the second; this double-locks hatch below; and this the door, that opens the entry.

Ursula. I am acquainted with every war them.

Don Diego. You know, Ursula, when I t Leonora from her father and mother, she was

live in the house with me three months; at the expiration of which time, I entered into a bond of four thousand pistoles, either to return her to them spotless, with half that sum for a dowry, or make her my true and lawful wife.

Ursula. And I warrant you, they came secretly to enquire of me, whether they might venture to trust your worship; Lord! said I, I have lived with the gentleman nine years and three quarters, come lammas, and never saw any thing uncivil by him in my life; nor no more I ever did: and to let your worship know, if I had, you would have mistaken your person; for, I bless Heaven, though I am poor, I'm honest, and would not live with any man alive, that should want to handle me unlawfully.

Don Diego. Ursula, I do believe it; and you are particularly happy, that both your age and your person exempt you from any such temptation. But, be this as it will, Leonora's parents, after some difficulty, consented to comply with my proposal; and, being fully satisfied with their daughter's temper and conduct, which I wanted to be acquainted with, this day being the expiration of the term, I am resolved to fulfil my bond, by marrying her to-morrow.

Ursula. Heaven bless you together!

Don Diego. During the time she has lived with me, she has never been a moment out of my sight; and now, tell me, Ursula, what have you observed in her?

Ursula. All meekness and gentleness, your worship; and yet, I warrant you, shrewd and sensible; egad! when she pleases, she can be as sharp as a needle.

Don Diego. You have not been able to discover any particular attachments?

Ursula. Why, sir, of late I have observed——

Don Diego. Eh! how! what?

Ursula. That she has taken greatly to the young kitten.

Don Diego. O! is that all?

Ursula. Ay, by my faith! I don't think she is fond of any thing else.

Don Diego. Of me! Ursula?

Ursula. Ay, ay, of the kitten, and your worship, and her birds, and going to mass. I have taken notice of late, that she is mighty fond of going to mass, as your worship lets her early of a morning.

Don Diego. Well! I am now going to her parents, to let them know my resolution. I will not take her with me: because, having been used to confinement, and it being the life I am determined she shall lead, it will be only giving her a bad habit. I shall return with the good folks to-morrow morning; in the mean time, Ursula, I confide in your attention; and take care, as you would merit my favour.

Ursula. I will, indeed, your worship; nay, if there is a widow gentlewoman in all Salamanca fitter to look after a young maiden——

Don Diego. Go, and send Leonora to me.

Ursula. I know the world, sir, though I say't:
I'm cautious, and wise;
And they, who surprise
My prudence nodding,
Must sit up late.

Never fear, sir,
Your safety's here, sir;
Yes, yes,
I'll answer for miss:
Let me alone;
I warrant my care
Shall weigh to a hair
As much as your own.

[*Exit.*

Don Diego. I dream't last night, that I was going to church with Leonora to be married, and that we were met on the road by a drove of oxen——Oxen——I don't like oxen; I wish it had been a flock of sheep.

Enter LEONORA *with a bird on her finger, which she holds in the other hand by a string.*

Leo. Say, little, foolish, flutt'ring thing,
Whither, ah! whither would you wing
Your airy flight;
Stay here, and sing,
Your mistress to delight.
No, no, no,
Sweet Robin, you shall not go:
Where, you wanton, could you be,
Half so happy as with me?

Don Diego. Leonora!

Leo. Here I am.

Don Diego. Look me in the face, and listen to me attentively.

Leo. There.

Don Diego. I am going this evening to your father and mother, and I suppose you are not ignorant of the cause of my journey? Are you willing to be my wife?

Leo. I am willing to do whatever you, and my father and mother, please.

Don Diego. But that's not the thing; do you like me?

Leo. Y——es.

Don Diego. What do you sigh for?

Leo. I don't know.

Don Diego. When you came hither, you were taken from a mean little house, ill situated, and worse furnished; you had no servants, and were obliged, with your mother, to do the work yourself.

Leo. Yes, but when we had done, I could look out at the window, or go a walking in the fields.

Don Diego. Perhaps you dislike confinement?

Leo. No, I don't, I'm sure.

Don Diego. I say, then, I took you from that mean habitation, and hard labour, to a noble building, and this fine garden; where, so far from being a slave, you are absolute mistress; and instead of wearing a mean stiff gown, look at yourself I beseech you; the dress you have on, is fit for a princess.

Leo. It is very fine, indeed.

Don Diego. Well, Leonora, you know in what manner you have been treated since you have been my companion; ask yourself again now, whether you can be content to lead a life with me according to the specimen you have had?

Leo. Specimen!

Don Diego. Ay, according to the manner I have treated you——according———

Leo. I'll do whatever you please.

Don Diego. Then, my dear, give me a kiss,

Leo. Good b'ye to you.

Don Diego. Here, Ursula!

By some I am told,
That I'm wrinkled and old;
But I will not believe what they say:
I feel my blood mounting,
Like streams in a fountain,
That merrily sparkle and play.

For love I have will,
And ability still;
Odsbobs, I can scarcely refrain!
My diamond, my pearl——
Well, be a good girl,
Until I come to you again.

[*Exit.*

Leo. Heigho!——I think I'm sick.——He's very good to me to be sure, and its my duty to love him, because we ought not to be ungrateful; but I wish I was not to marry him for all that, though I am afraid to tell him so. Fine feathers, they say, make fine birds; but, I am sure, they don't make happy ones; a sparrow is happier in the fields, than a gold-finch in a cage. There is something makes me mighty uneasy. While he was talking to me, I thought I never saw any thing look so ugly in my life——O dear now! why did I forget to ask leave to go to mass to-morrow? I suppose, because he's abroad, Ursula won't take me—I wish I had asked leave to go to mass.

Was I a shepherd's maid, to keep
On yonder plains a flock of sheep,
Well pleas'd, I'd watch the live-long day,
My ewes at feed, my lambs at play.

Or wou'd some bird, that pity brings,
But for a moment lend its wings,
My parents then might rave and scold,
My guardian strive my will to hold:
Their words are harsh, his walls are high,
But, spite of all, away I'd fly.

SCENE II.—*Changes to a street in Salamanca.*

LEANDER *enters with two scholars; all in their university gowns.*

Lean. His name is Don Diego; there's his house, like another monastery, or rather prison; his servants are an ancient duenna, and a negro slave——

1*st Scho.* And after having lived fifty years a batchelor, this old fellow has picked up a young thing of sixteen, whom he by chance saw in a balcony.

Lean. Yes; her parents are decayed gentry, that live about a mile or two from Salamanca here; and he has made the most ridiculous agreement with them!

2*d Scho.* And you are in love with the girl?

Lean. To desperation; and I believe I am not indifferent to her; for finding, that her jealous guardian took her to the chapel of a neighbouring convent every morning before it was light, I went there, in the habit of a pilgrim, planting myself as near her as I could; I then varied my appearance, continuing to do so from time to time, till I was convinced she had sufficiently remarked, and understood my meaning.

1*st Scho.* Well, Leander, I'll say that for you, there is not a more industrious lad in the university of Salamanca, when a wench is to be ferreted.

2*d Scho.* But, prithee, tell us now, how did you get information?

Lean. First, from report, which raised my curiosity; and afterwards from the negro I just now mentioned: I observed, that, when the family was gone to bed, he often came to air himself at yonder grate. You know I am no bad chanter, nor a very scurvy minstrel; so, taking a guitar, clapping a black patch on my eye, and a swathe upon one of my legs, I soon scraped acquaintance with my friend Mungo. He adores my songs and sarabands, and, taking me for a poor cripple, often repays me with a share of his allowance, which I accept, to avoid suspicion.

1*st Scho.* And so——

Lean. And so, sir, he has told me all the secrets of his family, and one worth knowing; for he informed me last night, that his master will this evening take a short journey into the country, from whence he proposes not to return till to-morrow, leaving his young wife that is to be, behind him.

2*d Scho.* Zounds! let's scale the wall!

Lean. Fair and softly! I will this instant go and put on my disguise, watch for the Don's going out, attack my negro friend, and try if, by his means, I cannot come into the house, or, at least, get a sight of my charming angel.

1st Scho. Angel! Is she then so handsome?

Lean. It is time for us to withdraw: come to my chambers, and there you shall know all you can desire.

Hither, Venus, with your doves,
Hither, all ye little loves;
Round me light your wings display,
And bear a lover on his way.

Oh, could I but, like Jove of old,
Transform myself to showery gold;
Or in a swan my passion shroud,
Or wrap it in an orient cloud;
What locks, what bars should then impede,
Or keep me from my charming maid! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Changes to the outside of* DON DIEGO'S *house, which appears with windows barred up, and an iron grate before an entry.*

DON DIEGO *enters from the house, having first unlocked the door, and removed two or three bars which assisted in fastening it.*

Don Diego. With the precautions I have taken, I think I run no risk in quitting my house for a short time. Leonora has never shewn the least inclination to deceive me; besides, my old woman is prudent and faithful; she has all the keys, and will not part with them from herself: but, suppose—suppose—by the rood and saint Francis, I will not leave it in her power to do mischief. A woman's not having it in her power to deceive you, is the best security for her fidelity, and the only one a wise man will confide in; fast bind, safe find, is an excellent proverb: I'll even lock her up with the rest; there is a hasp to the door, and I have a padlock within, which shall be my guarantee. I will wait till the negro returns with provisions he is gone to purchase; and, clapping them all up together, make my mind easy, by having the key they are under in my pocket.

Enter MUNGO *with a hamper.*

Mungo. Go, get you down, you damn hamper, you carry me now. Curse my old massa, sending me always here and dere for one something to make me tire like a mule—curse him imperance—and him damn insurance!

Don Diego. How now?

Mungo. Ah, massa, bless your heart!

Don Diego. What's that you are muttering, sirrah?

Mungo. Nothing, massa; only me say, you very good massa.

Don Diego. What do you leave your load down there for?

Mungo. Massa, me lilly tire.

Don Diego. Take it up, rascal.

Mungo. Yes, bless your heart, massa!

Don Diego. No, lay it down: now I think on't, come hither.

Mungo. What you say, massa?

Don Diego. Can you be honest?

Mungo. Me no savee, massa; you never ax me before.

Don Diego. Can you tell truth?

Mungo. What you give me, massa?

Don Diego. There's a pistreen for you; now tell me, do you know of any ill going on in my house?

Mungo. Ah, massa, a damn deal!

Don Diego. How! that I'm a stranger to?

Mungo. No, massa, you lick me every day with your rattan: I'm sure massa, that's mischief enough for poor neger man.

Don Diego. So, so.

Mungo. La, massa, how could you have a heart to lick poor neger man, as you lick me last Thursday?

Don Diego. If you have not a mind I should chastise you now, hold your tongue.

Mungo. Yes, massa, if you no lick me again.

Don Diego. Listen to me, I say.

Mungo. You know, massa, me very good servant.

Don Diego. Then you will go on?

Mungo. And ought to be use kine——

Don Diego. If you utter another syllable——

Mungo. And I'm sure, massa, you can't deny but I worky worky—I dress a victuals, and run a errands, and wash a house, and make a beds, and scrub a shoes, and wait a table——

Don Diego. Take that—Now will you listen to me?

Mungo. La, massa, if ever I saw———

Don Diego. I am going abroad, and shall not return till to-morrow morning—During this night I charge you not to sleep a wink, but be watchful as a lynx, and keep walking up and down the entry, that, if you hear the least noise, you may alarm the family.

Mungo. So I must be stay in a cold all night, and have no sleep, and get no tanks neither; then him call me tief, and rogue, and rascal, to temp me.

Don Diego. Stay here, perverse animal, and take care, that nobody approaches the door; I am going in, and shall be out again in a moment. [*Exit.*

Mungo. Dear heart, what a terrible life am I led!
A dog has a better, that's sheltered and fed:
Night and day 'tis de same,
My pain is dere game;
Me wish to de Lord me was dead!

Whate'er's to be done,
Poor black must run;
Mungo here, Mungo dere,
Mungo every where;

Above and below,
Sirrah come, sirrah go!
Do so, and do so.
Oh, oh!
Me wish to de Lord me was dead!
[*Exit.*

Enter DON DIEGO *with* URSULA, *who, after the negro goes in, appears to bolt the door on the inside: Then* DON DIEGO, *unseen by them, puts on a large padlock, and goes off. After which,* LEANDER *enters disguised, and* MUNGO *comes to the grate.*

Lean. So—my old Argus is departed, and the evening is as favourable for my design, as I could wish. Now to attract my friend Mungo; if he is within hearing of my guitar, I am sure he will quickly make his appearance.

Mungo. Who goes dere?—Hip, hollo!

Lean. Heaven bless you, my worthy master, will your worship's honour have a little music this evening? and I have got a delicious bottle of cordial here, given me by a charitable monk of a convent hard by, if your grace will please to taste it.

Mungo. Give me sup, troo a grate; come closee, man; don't be fear; old massa gone out, as I say last night, and he no come back before to-morrow; come, trikee moosic, and give us song.

Lean. I'll give your worship a song I learned in Barbary, when I was a slave among the Moors.

Mungo. Ay, do.

Lean. There was a cruel and malicious Turk, who was called Heli Abdallah Mahomet Scah. Now, this wicked Turk had a fair Christian slave named Jezabel, who, not consenting to his beastly desires, he draws out his sabre, and is going to cut off her head. Here's what he says to her. [*Sings and plays.*] Now you shall hear the slave's answer. [*Sings and plays again.*] Now you shall hear how the wicked Turk, being greatly enraged, is again going to cut off the fair slave's head. [*Sings and plays again.*] Now you shall hear——

Mungo. What signify me hear?—Me no understand.

Lean. Oh, you want something you understand! If your honour had said that——

URSULA *above:*

Ursula. Mungo, Mungo!

Mungo. Some one call dere——

Ursula. Mungo, I say!

Mungo. What devil you want?

Ursula. What lewd noise is that?

Mungo. Lewd you self, no lewd here; play away; never mind her.

Ursula. I shall come down, if you go on.

Mungo. Ay, come along, more merrier; noting here but poor man; he sing for bit of bread.

Ursula. I'll have no poor man near our door: Hark'e, fellow? can you play the Forsaken Maid's Delight, or Black Bess of Castile? Ah, Mungo, if you had heard me sing, when I was young—

Mungo. Gad, I'm sure, I hear you voice often enough, now you old.

Ursula. I could quaver like any black-bird.

Mungo. Come throw a poor soul a penny; he play a tune for you.

Ursula. How did you lose the use of your leg?

Lean. In the wars, my good dame; I was taken by a Barbary corsair, and carried into Sallee, where I lived eleven years and three quarters upon cold water and the roots of the earth, without having a coat on my back, or laying my head on a pillow; an infidel bought me for a slave; he gave me the strappado on my shoulders, and the bastinado on the soles of my feet: now this infidel Turk had fifty-three wives, and one hundred and twelve concubines.

Ursula. Then he was an unreasonable villain.

LEONORA *above.*

Leo. Ursula!

Ursula. Od's my life, what's here to do! Go back, go back: fine work we shall have, indeed! good man, good bye.

Leo. I could not stay any longer by myself; pray let me take a little air at the grate?

Lean. Do, worthy madam; let the young gentlewoman stay; I'll play her a love song for nothing.

Ursula. No, no, none of your love songs here; if you could play a saraband indeed, and there was room for one's motions——

Lean. I am but a poor man, but if your ladyship will let me in as far as the hall, or the kitchen, you may all dance, and I shan't ask anything.

Ursula. Why, if it was not on my master's account, I should think no harm in a little innocent recreation.

Mungo. Do, and let us dance.

Lean. Has ma'am the keys, then?

Ursula. Yes, yes, I have the keys.

Lean. Have you the key of this padlock too, madam? Here's a padlock upon the door. Heaven help us, large enough for a state prison.

Ursula. Eh—how—what, a padlock!

Mungo. Here it is, I feel it; adod its a tumper!

Ursula. He was afraid to trust me, then?—

Mungo. And if de house was a fire, we must of us get out to save ourselves.

Lean. Well, madam, not to disappoint you and the young lady, I know the back of your

garden wall, and I'll undertake to get up at the outside of it, if you can let me down on the other.

Ursula. Do you think you could with your lame leg?

Lean. O yes, madam, I'm very sure.

Ursula. Then, by my faith, you shall! for now I am set on't——A padlock! Mungo, come with me into the garden.

[*Exeunt* MUNGO *and* URSULA.

Leo. Pray let me go with you!

Lean. Stay, charming creature! why will you fly the youth that adores you?

Leo. Oh, Lord! I'm frighted out of my wits!

Lean. Have you not taken notice, beauteous Leonora, of the pilgrim, who has so often met you at church? I am that pilgrim; one who would change shapes as often as Proteus, to be blessed with a sight of you.

O thou, whose charms enslave my heart!
In pity hear a youth complain:

Leo. I must not hear—dear youth, depart—
I'm certain I have no desert,
A gentleman like you to gain.

Lean. Then, do I seek your love in vain?

Leo. It is another's right;

Lean. And he,
Distracting thought! must happy be,
While I am doomed to pain.

Enter URSULA *and* MUNGO.

Ursula. Come round, young man, I've been to try.

Mungo. And so have I.
I'm sure the wall is not too high.
If you please,
You'll mount with ease.

Lean. Can you to aid my bliss deny?
Shall it be so?
If you say no,
I will not go.

Leo. I must consent, however loath:
But whenever we desire,
Make him promise to retire.

Ursula. Nay, marry, he shall take his oath.

Lean. By your eyes, of heavenly blue;
By your lip's ambrosial dew;
Your cheeks, where rose and lily blend;
Your voice, the music of the spheres.

Mungo. Lord o'mercy, how he swears!
He makes my hairs
All stand an end!

Ursula. Come, that's enough; ascend, ascend.
Let's be happy while we may:
Now the old one's far away,
Laugh, and sing, and dance, and play;
Harmless pleasure why delay?

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A hall in* DON DIEGO'S *house.*

Enter LEANDER *in a rich habit,* URSULA *following.*

Ursula. OH, shame! out upon't! sir, talk to me no more; I, that have been famed throughout all Spain, as I may say, for virtue and discretion; the very flower and quintessence of duennas; you have cast a blot upon me; a blot upon my reputation, that was as fair as a piece of white paper; and now I shall be reviled, pointed at; nay, men will call me filthy names upon your account!

Lean. What filthy names will they call you?

Ursula. They'll say I'm an old procuress.

Lean. Fy, fy! men know better things; besides, though I have got admittance into your house, be assured I shall commit no outrage here; and if I have been guilty of any indiscretion, let love be my excuse.

Ursula. Well, as I live, he's a pretty young fellow! [*Aside.*

Lean. You, my sweet Ursula, have known what it is to be in love; and, I warrant, have had admirers often at your feet; your eyes still retain fire enough to tell me that.

Ursula. They tell you no lie; for, to be sure, when I was a young woman, I was greatly sought after; nay, it was reported that a youth died for love of me; one Joseph Perez, a tailor by trade, of the greyhound make, lank; and, if my memory fail me not, his right shoulder, about the breadth of my hand, higher than his left; but he was upright as an arrow; and, by all accounts, one of the finest workmen at a button-hole!

Lean. But where is Leonora?

Ursula. Where is she! By my troth, I have shut her up in her chamber, under three bolts, and a double lock.

Lean. And will you not bring us together?

Ursula. Who, I! How can you ask me such a question? Really, sir, I take it extremely unkind.

Lean. Well, but you misapprehend———

Ursula. I told you just now, that if you mentioned that to me again, it would make me sick; and so it has turned me upside down as it were.

Lean. Indeed, my best friend——

Ursula. Oh, oh! hold me, or I shall fall.

Lean. I will hold you.

Ursula. And do you feel any compassion for me?

Lean. I do, I do.

Ursula. Why, truly, you have a great deal to answer for, to bring tears into my eyes at this time o' day. I'm sure they are the first I have shed, since my poor dear husband's death.

Lean. Nay, don't think of that now.

Ursula. For you must understand, sir, to play a trick upon a grave, discreet matron—And yet, after all, by my faith, I don't wonder you should ove the young thing under my care; for it is one af the sweetest conditioned souls that ever I was quainted with; and, between ourselves, our Donn-ee is too old for such a babe.

Lean. Ursula, take this gold.

Ursula. For what, sir?

Lean. Only for the love of me.

Ursula. Nay, if that be all, I won't refuse it, for I love you, I assure you; you put me so much in mind of my poor dear husband. He was a handsome man! I remember he had a mole between his eye-brows, about the bigness of a hazel nut; but, I must say, you have the advantage in the lower part of the countenance.

Lean. The old beldam grows amorous—

Ursula. Lord love you, you're a well-looking young man!

Lean. But, Leonora.

Ursula. Ha ha, ha! but to pretend you were lame—I never saw a finer leg in my life.

Lean. Leonora!

Ursula. Well, sir, I am a-going.

Lean. I shall never get rid of her!

Ursula. Sir——

Lean. How now?

Ursula. Would you be so kind, sir, as to indulge me with the favour of a salute?

Lean. Ugh!

Ursula. Gad-a-mercy, your cheek! well, well, I have seen the day—but no matter, my wine's upon the lees now; however, sir, you might have had the politeness, when a gentlewoman made the offer—But Heaven bless you!

When a woman's front is wrinkled,
And her hairs are sprinkled
With grey,
Lack-a-day!
How her lovers fall away!

Like fashions past,
Aside she's cast,
No one respect will pay:
Remember,
Lasses, remember,
And while the sun shines make hay;
You must not expect in December
The flowers you gathered in May.

[*Exit* URSULA.

Enter MUNGO.

Mun. Ah, massa! You brave massa now! what you do here wid de old woman?

Lean. Where is your young mistress, Mungo?

Mun. By Gog, she lock her up. But why you no tell me before time, you a gentleman?

Lean. Sure I have not given the purse for nothing!

Mun. Purse! What! you giving her money, den? Curse her impurance, why you no give it me? you give me something as well as she. You know, massa, you see me first.

Lean. There, there—are you content?

Mun. Me get supper ready, and now me go to de cellar—But I say, massa, ax de old man now, what good him watching do, him bolts, and him bars, him walls, and him padlock?

Lean. Hist! Leonora comes.

Mun. But, massa, you say you teach me play?

Let me, when my heart a sinking,
Hear de sweet guitar a clinking;
When a string speak,
Such moosic he make,
Me soon am cured of tinking.

Wid de toot, toot, toot,
Of a merry flute,
And cymbalo,
And tymbalo,
To boot:
We dance and we sing,
Till we make a house ring,
And, tied in his garters, old Massa may swing.

[*Exit* MUNGO.

Enter LEONORA *and* URSULA.

Lean. Oh, charming Leonora! how shall I express the rapture of my heart upon this occasion? I almost doubt the kindness of that chance which has brought me thus happily to see, to speak to you, without restraint.

Ursula. Well, but it must not be without restraint; it can't be without restraint; it can't, by my faith! now you are going to make me sick again.

Leo. La, Ursula, I durst to say, the gentleman doesn't want to do me any harm——Do you, sir? I'm sure I would not hurt a hair of his head, nor nobody's else, for the lucre of the whole world.

Ursula. Come, sir, where is your lute? You shall see me dance a saraband; or, if you'd rather have a song——or the child and I will move a minuet, if you chuse grace before agility.

Lean. This fulsome harridan——

Leo. I don't know what's come over her, sir; I never saw the like of her, since I was born.

Lean. I wish she was at the devil!

Leo. Ursula, what's the matter with you?

Ursula. What's the matter with me! Marry come up, what's the matter with you? Signior Diego can't shew such a shape as that; well, there is nothing I like better than to see a young fellow with a well made leg.

Lean. Prithee, let us go away from her.

Leo. I don't know how to do it, sir.

Lean. Nothing more easy; I will go with my guitar into the garden; 'tis moon-light; take an opportunity to follow me there: I swear to you, beautiful and innocent creature, you have nothing to apprehend.

Leo. No, sir, I am certain of that, with a gentleman such as you are; and that have taken so much pains to come after me; and I should hold myself very ungrateful, if I did not do any thing to oblige you, in a civil way.

Lean. Then you'll come?

Leo. I'll do my best endeavours, sir.

Lean. And may I hope that you love me?

Leo. I don't know; as to that, I can't say.

Ursula. Come, come, what colloguing's here? I must see how things are going forward; besides, sir, you ought to know, that it is not manners to be getting into corners, and whispering before company.

Lean. Pshaw!

Ursula. Ay, you may say your pleasure, sir, but I'm sure what I say is the right thing; I should hardly chuse to venture in a corner with you myself: nay, I would not do it, I protest and vow——

Lean. Beautiful Leonora, I find my being depends upon the blessing of your good opinion; do you desire to put an end to my days?

Leo. No, indeed, indeed I don't.

Lean. But then——

In vain you bid your captive live,
While you the means of life deny;
Give me your smiles, your wishes give,
To him who must without you die.

Shut from the sun's enlivening beam,
Bid flowers retain their scent and hue;
Its source dried up, bid flow the stream,
And me exist, deprived of you.

[*Exit* LEAN.

Ursula. Let me sit down a little: come hither, child, I am going to give you good advice; therefore listen to me, for I have more years over my head than you.

Leo. Well, and what then?

Ursula. What then? Marry, then you must mind what I say to you—as I said before—but, I say—what was I saying?

Leo. I'm sure I don't know.

Ursula. You see the young man that is gone out there; he has been telling me, that he's dying for love of you; can you find in your heart to let him expire?

Leo. I'm sure I won't do any thing bad.

Ursula. Why, that's right; you learned that from me; have I not said to you a thousand times, never do any thing bad? Have not I said it? Answer me that.

Leo. Well, and what then?

Ursula. Very well, listen to me; your guardian is old, and ugly, and jealous; and yet he may live longer than a better man.

Leo. He has been very kind to me, for all that, Ursula, and I ought to strive to please him.

Ursula. There again! have not I said to you a thousand times, that he was very kind to you, and you ought to strive to please him? It would be a hard thing to be preaching from morning till night without any profit.

Leo. Well, Ursula, after all, I wish this gentleman had never got into the house; Heaven send no ill comes of it!

Ursula. Ay, I say so, too; Heaven send it; but I'm cruelly afraid; for how shall we get rid of him? he'll never be able to crawl up the inside of the wall, whatever he did the out.

Leo. O Lord! Won't he?

Ursula. No, by my conscience, won't he; and when your guardian comes in, if we had fifty necks a-piece, he'd twist them every one, if he finds him here. For my part, the best I expect, is to end my old days in a prison.

Leo. You don't say so!

Ursula. I do indeed; and it kills me to think of it; but every one has their evil day, and this has been mine.

Leo. I have promised to go to him into the garden.

Ursula. Nay, you may do any thing now, for we are undone; though I think, if you could persuade him to get up the chimney, and stay on the roof of the house till to-morrow night, we might then steal the keys from your guardian; but I'm afraid you won't be able to persuade him.

Leo. I'll go down upon my knees.

Ursula. Find him out, while I step up stairs.

Leo. Pray for us, dear Ursula.

Ursula. I will, if I possibly can.

Leo. Oh me, oh me, what shall we do!
The fault is all along of you:
You brought him in, why did you so?
'Twas not by my desire, you know.

We have but too much cause to fear,
My guardian, when he comes to hear
We've had a man with us, will kill
Me, you, and all; indeed he will.
No penitence will pardon procure,
He'll kill us ev'ry soul, I'm sure.

[*Exit* LEO.

SCENE II.

Enter DON DIEGO, *groping his way, with the padlock in his hand.*

Don Diego. All dark, all quiet; gone to bed, and fast asleep, I warrant them. However, I am

not sorry that I altered my first intention of staying out the whole night; and meeting Leonora's father on the road was, at any rate, a lucky incident. I will not disturb them; but, since I have let myself in with my master-key, go softly to bed; I shall be able to strike a light; and then, I think, I may say my cares are over. Good Heavens! what a wonderful deal of uneasiness may mortals avoid by a little prudence! I doubt not now, there are some men who would have gone out in my situation, and, trusting to the goodness of Fortune, left their house and their honour in the care of an inexperienced girl, or the discretion of a mercenary servant. While he is abroad, he is tormented with fears and jealousies; and when he returns home, he probably finds disorder, and, perhaps, shame. But what do I do?—I put a padlock on my door, and all is safe.

Enter MUNGO *from the cellar, with a flask in one hand, and a candle in the other.*

Mungo. Tol, lol, lol, lol.

Don Diego. Hold! did not I hear a noise!

Mungo. Hola!

Don Diego. Heaven and earth! what do I see!

Mungo. Where are you, young massa, and missy? Here wine for supper.

Don Diego. I'm thunder-struck!

Mungo. My old massa little tink we be so merry——hic—hic—What's the matter with me? the room turn round.

Don Diego. Wretch! do you know me?

Mungo. Know you——damn you!

Don Diego. Horrid creature!——what makes you here at this time of night? is it with a design to surprise the innocents in their beds, and murder them sleeping?

Mungo. Hush, hush—make no noise——hic—hic.

Don Diego. The slave is intoxicated!

Mungo. Make no noise, I say; deres young gentleman wid young lady; he play on guitar, and she like him better dan she like you. Fal, lal, lal!

Don Diego. Monster, I'll make an example of you!

Mungo. What you call me names for, you old dog?

Don Diego. Does the villain dare to lift his hand against me!

Mungo. Will you fight?

Don Diego. He's mad!

Mungo. Deres one in de house you little tink. Gad, he do you business!

Don Diego. Go, ly down in your stye and sleep!

Mungo. Sleep! sleep you self; you drunk—ha, ha, ha! look, a padlock; you put a padlock on a door again, will you?——Ha, ha, ha!

Don Diego. Did not I hear music?

Mungo. Hic—hic———

Don Diego. Was it not the sound of a guitar?

Mungo. Yes, he play on de guitar rarely—Give me hand; you're old rascal——an't you?

Don Diego. What dreadful shock affects me! I'm in a cold sweat; a mist comes over my eyes; and my knees knock together, as if I had got a fit of the shaking palsy.

Mungo. I tell you a word in your ear—

Don Diego. Has any stranger broke into my house?

Mungo. Yes; by—hic—a fine young gentleman; he now in a next room with missy.

Don Diego. Holy saint Francis! Is it possible?

Mungo. Go you round softly——you catch them togeder.

Don Diego. Confusion! distraction! I shall run mad!

O wherefore this terrible flurry!
My spirits are all in a hurry!
And above, and below,
From my top to my toe,
Are running about hurry scurry.

My heart in my bosom a bumping,
Goes thumping,
And jumping,
And thumping:
Is't a spectre I see!
Hence, vanish, ah me!
My senses deceive me;
Soon reason will leave me:
What a wretch am I destined to be.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

MUNGO, URSULA, LEANDER, LEONORA.

Urs. O shame, monstrous! you drunken swab, you have been in the cellar, with a plague to you!

Mungo. Let me put my hands about you neck——

Urs. Oh, I shall be ruined! Help, help! ruin, ruin!

Lean. Goodness me, what's the matter?

Urs. O dear child, this black villain has frightened me out of my wits; he has wanted——

Mungo. Me! curse a heart, I want noting wid her—what she say I want for———

Leo. Ursula, the gentleman says he has some friends waiting for him at the other side of the garden-wall, that will throw him over a ladder made of ropes, which he got up by.

Lean. Then, must I go?

Leo. Yes; good sir, yes.

Lean. A parting kiss!

Leo. No; good sir, no.
Lean. It must be so.
By this, and this,
Here I could for ever grow:
'Tis more than mortal bliss.
Leo. Well, now good night;
Pray ease our fright.
You're very bold, sir!
Let loose your hold, sir!
I think you want to scare me quite.
Lean. Oh Fortune's spight!
Leo. Good night, good night.

Hark! the neighbouring convent's bell
Tolls, the vesper hour to tell;
The clock now chimes;
A thousand times,
A thousand times, farewell!

Enter DON DIEGO.

Don Diego. Stay, sir; let nobody go out of the room.

Urs. [*Falling down.*] Ah, ah! a ghost, a ghost!

Don Diego. Woman, stand up!

Urs. I won't, I won't: murder! don't touch me.

Don Diego. Leonora, what am I to think of this?

Leo. Oh, dear sir, don't kill me!

Don Diego. Young man, who are you, who have thus clandestinely, at an unseasonable hour, broke into my house? Am I to consider you as a robber, or how?

Lean. As one, whom love has made indiscreet; one, whom love taught industry and art to compass his designs. I love the beautiful Leonora, and she me; but, farther than what you hear and see, neither one nor the other have been culpable.

Mungo. Hear him, hear him!

Lean. Don Diego, you know my father well; Don Alphonso de Luna. I am a scholar of this university, and am willing to submit to whatever punishment he, through your means, shall inflict; but wreak not your vengeance here.

Don Diego. Thus, then, my hopes and cares are at once frustrated! Possessed of what I thought a jewel, I was desirous to keep it for myself; I raised up the walls of this house to a great height; I barred up my windows towards the street; I put double bolts on my doors; I banished all that had the shadow of man, or male kind; and I stood continually centinel over it myself, to guard my suspicion from surprise: thus secured, I left my watch for one little moment, and in that moment———

Leon. Pray, pray, guardian, let me tell you the story, and you'll find I am not to blame.

Don Diego. No, child, I only am to blame, who should have considered, that sixteen and sixty agree ill together. But, though I was too old to be wise, I am not too old to learn; and so, I say, send for a smith directly, beat all the grates from my windows, take the locks from my doors, and let egress and regress be given freely.

Leon. And will you be my husband, sir?

Don Diego. No, child, I will give you to one that will make you a better husband: here, young man, take her. If your parents consent, to-morrow shall see you joined in the face of the church; and the dowry, which I promised her, in case of failure on my side of the contract, shall now go with her as a marriage-portion.

Lean. Signior, this is so generous———

Don Diego. No thanks; perhaps I owe acknowledgments to you: but you, Ursula, have no excuse, no passion to plead, and your age should have taught you better. I'll give you five hundred crowns, but never let me see you more.

Mungo. And what you give me, massa?

Don Diego. Bastinadoes for your drunkenness and infidelity. Call in my neighbours and friends. Oh, man! man! how short is your foresight! how ineffectual your prudence! while the very means you use are destructive of your ends.

Go forge me fetters, that shall bind
The rage of the tempestuous wind;
Sound with a needle full of thread,
The depth of ocean's steepy bed;
Snap, like a twig, the oak's tough tree;
Quench Etna with a cup of tea;
In these manœuvres shew your skill,
Then hold a woman, if you will.

Urs. Permit me to put in a word:
My master here is quite absurd;
That men should rule our sex, is meet,
But art, not force, must do the feat.
Remember what the fable says;
Where the sun's warm and melting rays
Soon bring about what wind and rain,
With all their fuss, attempt in vain.

Mung. And, massa, be not angry, pray,
If neger man a word should say:
Me have a fable pat as she,
Which wid dis matter will agree:
An owl once took it in his head,
Wid some young pretty bird to wed:
But when his worship came to woo,
He could get none but de cuckoo.

Leon. Ye youth select, who wish to taste
The joys of wedlock pure and chaste;
Ne'er let the mistress and the friend,
In abject slave and tyrant end.
While each with tender passion burns,
Ascend the throne of rule by turns;
And place (to love, to virtue just)
Security in mutual trust.

Lean. To sum up all you now have heard,
Young men and old, peruse the bard;
A female trusted to your care,
His rule is pithy, short, and clear.
Be to her faults a little blind;
Be to her virtues very kind:
Let all her ways be unconfined;
And clap your padlock on her mind.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

DR LAST IN HIS CHARIOT.

BY

BICKERSTAFF and FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
AILWOULD, *always fancying himself ill.*	MRS AILWOULD, *wife to* AILWOULD.
DR LAST.	NANCY, *daughter to* AILWOULD.
FRIENDLY, *brother-in-law to* AILWOULD.	POLLY, *her younger sister.*
HARGRAVE, *attached to* NANCY.	PRUDENCE, *maid to* NANCY.
WAG, *his servant.*	*Physicians, &c.*

Scene—AILWOULD'S *house in London.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A parlour in* AILWOULD'S *house, with a table and chairs.*

Enter PRUDENCE, *followed by* WAG.

Wag. WELL, but Mrs Prudence, don't be in a passion!

Pru. Mr Wag, I will be in a passion; and its enough to put any one in a passion to have to do with such indiscreet people as your master. I believe he's out of his senses, for my part.

Wag. He's in love, Mrs Prudence, and that's half way.

Pru. So often as he has been forbid either to come or send after my mistress, to persist, in spite of all our cautions and interdictions——

Wag. He does not come or send, child.

Pru. No—What do you do here, then, and be hanged to you!

Wag. I only bring a letter.

Pru. Very pretty jesting, truly! I was afraid that some of the family would take notice of my talking to you in the hall. But, in truth, here is no place of safety in the house; for now I've brought you up here, I'm afraid every moment of my master's surprising us.

Wag. Does the old gentleman always keep the house, then?

Pru. Keep the house!—he generally keeps his chamber, and very often his bed. You must know he's one of those folks, that are always sick, continually complaining, ever taking physic, and, in reality, never ailing any thing. I'm his nurse, with a plague to him! and he worries me out of my life.

Wag. Would I were sick upon the same conditions!

Pru. Come, come, no fooling. You said you had a letter from your master to my young lady: give it me, and I'll deliver it to her.

Wag. There it is, my dear.

Pru. But am I not a very naughty wench, to be accessary, in this manner, to a clandestine correspondence?

Wag. The billet is perfectly innocent, I can assure you; and such as your lady will read with pleasure.

Pru. Well, now, go away.

Wag. I won't, without you give me a kiss.

Pru. Poh, you're a fool.

Wag. I won't, pox———

Pru. Then you may stay there all night.

Wag. Mrs Prue—come.

Pru. Nay, if its worth having, its worth fetching.

Wag. Say you so, my girl—Thus, then, I approach those charming lips.

[*Drawing near her with ridiculous ceremony. A bell rings violently.*]

Pru. Confusion! away, away, away!—begone, as quick as you can, or we are both ruined!

Wag. Ay! how! what the devil's the matter?

Pru. My master's bell, my master's bell! He rings again! Down the back stairs, and let yourself out at the street-door. I can't stay to talk to you any longer now—Adieu!

[*Exit.*

Wag. [*As he is going off.*] Hey, what a ringing's here! one would think the house was on fire. [*Exit.*

AILWOU'D *comes through the back-scene in a night-gown and flannel-cap, his crutch in one hand, and a small bell in the other.*

Ail. O lord, O lord, here's usage for a poor, helpless, sick man! There's nobody in the house! sure, there can be nobody; they've all deserted me, and left me alone to expire without assistance.———I made shift to muster up sufficient strength to crawl thus far; and now, I can die here. [*Drops into the arm-chair with a piteous groan; then, after a short pause, starting and staring.*] Mercy on me, what's the matter with me! I am suddenly seized with a shivering fit! And now, I burn like a red-hot coal of fire!—And now again—shiver, shiver, shiver! as if my blood was turned into snow-water! Prudence, Nancy, Mrs Ailwou'd, love, wife! They're all deaf! and my bell is not loud enough neither! Prudence, I say!

Enter PRUDENCE.

Pru. Here, sir, here! What's the matter?

Ail. Ah, you jade, you slut!

Pru. [*Pretending to have hurt her head.*]—The deuce take your impatience! you hurry people so, you have made me break my head against the window-shutter.

Ail. You baggage, you———'tis above an hour——

Pru. [*Crying.*] Dear me, how it smarts!

Ail. Above an hour that I have been wanting somebody.

Pru. Oh, oh!

Ail. Hold your tongue, hussy, till I scold you!

Pru. Very pretty, in troth, after the blow I have got!

Ail. You have left me to bawl and call, till I am hoarse again.

Pru. And you have made me get a great bump on my forehead; so put one against the other, and we're quit.

Ail. How, Mrs Impudence?

Pru. If you scold, I'll cry.

Ail. To desert me in such a mannner!

Pru. [*Crying.*] Oh, oh, oh!

Ail. Are you at it again? Why, you pert, brazen, audacious, provoking, abominable, insolent—Shan't I be allowed to have the pleasure of finding fault with you?

Pru. You may have that pleasure, if you will; and it's as fair that I should have the pleasure of crying, if I like it.

Ail. Well, well, I have done. Take away these things, and get me my medicine. It's three hours and two minutes since I took it——and don't you know the prescription says every three hours? I feel the bad effect of my omission already.

Pru. Lord, sir, why will you drench yourself with such nasty slops? One would think the physicians and apothecaries could find sufficient stuff for your craving bowels; but you must go to the quacks, too: and this Doctor Last, with his universal, balsamic, restorative cordial, that turns water into asses milk.

Ail. That's a good girl! go on!

Pru. Methinks, if one was to take physic, one would rather choose to go to a regular physician than to a quack.

Ail. And why so, my dainty adviser?

Pru. For the same reason, that, if I wanted a pair of shoes, I would rather go to an established shoe-maker, than lay out my money at a Yorkshire warehouse.

Ail. If I hear any more of your impudence, I'll break your head to some purpose; it shan't be a bump in the forehead will serve you.

Pru. Eh, you old fanciful, foolish——

[*Aside.*

Ail. Go, and call my daughter Nancy to me; I have something to say to her.

Pru. She's here, sir.

Enter NANCY.

Ail. Come here, Nancy; I want to speak with you.

Nan. What's your pleasure, sir?

Ail. Stay; before I say or do any thing further, I'll go into the next room, and take my medicine———I should be a great fool to forget that.

Pru. Ay, sir, so you would.

Ail. I should, indeed, for it does me a prodigious deal of good; though I must take a little cooling physic, too, in order to correct the juices.

[*Exit.*

Nan. Prudence.

Pru. Madam?

Nan. Look on me a little.

Pru. Well, I do look on you.

Nan. Prudence!

Pru. Well, what would you have with Prudence?

Nan. Can't you guess?

Pru. Some discourse, I suppose, about our new acquaintance, Mr Hargrave; for you have done nothing but talk of him for this week past.

Nan. And can you blame me for the good opinion I have of him?

Pru. Who says I do?

Nan. Or would you have me insensible to the tender protestations which he makes me?

Pru. Heaven forbid!

Nan. Prithee, tell me now, Prudence, don't you really think there was something of destiny in the odd adventure, that brought us acquainted?

Pru. Certainly.

Nan. Was there not something uncommonly brave and gentleman-like in that action of rescuing me, without knowing any thing of me?

Pru. Very genteel and gentleman-like, indeed!

Nan. And was it possible for any one to make a more generous use of it?

Pru. Impossible.

Nan. Then, Prue, he has a most charming person. Don't you think so?

Pru. Who can think otherwise?

Nan. Something very noble in his air?

Pru. Very noble!

Nan. Then, he talks like an angel.

Pru. Ay, and writes like an angel, too, I dare swear, madam, as this letter will show.

Nan. From Mr Hargrave! You wicked girl, why would you keep it from me so long?

[*Snatches it from her, and reads it to herself.*]

Pru. Well, madam, what does the gentleman say?

Nan. Every thing, dear Prue; every thing in the world, that I could wish or desire. He says he can't live happy without me; and that he will, by the means of a common friend, immediately make a formal proposal for me to my father.

Pru. But do you think, madam, that your father will listen?

Nan. He can have no objection, Prudence.

Pru. No, madam; but your mother-in-law may, who governs him, and I am sure bears you no good will. The best joke is, she thinks she has wheedled me into her interests——

Nan. Hush, here's my father!

Enter AILWOOD.

Ail. Nancy, child, I have a piece of news to tell you, that, perhaps, you little expect. Here's a match proposed to me for you. You smile at that! Ah, nature, nature! By what I perceive, then, I need not ask you if you are willing?

Nan. I am ready to submit to your commands in every thing, sir. Dear Prue, this is beyond my hopes!

Pru. Mr Hargrave has kept his word, madam.

Ail. What are you whispering about?

Nan. Nothing, sir.

Ail. Well, child, at any rate, I am glad to find you in so complying a disposition; for, to tell you the truth, I was resolved on the thing before I mentioned it to you, and had even given my word to put it as expeditiously as possible into execution.

Pru. I am sure you are very much in the right of it, sir; 'tis the wisest thing you ever did in your life.

Ail. I have not seen the gentleman yet, but I am told he will be every way to the satisfaction of us both.

Nan. That, sir, I am certain of, for I have seen him already.

Ail. Have you?

Nan. Since your consent, sir, encourages me to discover my inclinations, you must know, that good fortune has lately brought us acquainted; and that the proposal, which has been made to you, is the effect of that esteem, which, at the first interview, we conceived for one another.

Ail. That's more than I knew, but no matter; the smoother things go on, the better I am pleased—He is but a little man I am told.

Nan. He's well made, sir.

Ail. Agreeable in his person?

Nan. Very agreeable.

Ail. In his address?

Nan. Perfectly elegant.

Ail. Really that's much—Very much, upon my word, that a man of low birth, and bred up to a mean profession—for, though the doctor has now fifteen thousand pounds in the funds, and gets eight or nine hundred a-year, he owes all to his medicinal secrets.

Nan. Sir!

Ail. At least so Mr Trash the book-seller, that vends his medicines, tells me; through whose mediation, indeed, this proposal is made.

Nan. Mr Trash! Has Mr Hargrave any thing to do, then——

Ail. Hargrave! Who the devil's he? I am talking of the person you are to marry, Dr Last, whose cordial has done me so much service. It seems he is a widower, and has a mind to get a second wife, that may do him some credit; such as his worldly circumstances intitle him to.

Nan. Well, but my dear sir——

Ail. Yes, child, I know it's very well——The Doctor is to be brought here to-day to be introduced to me, and I am really concerned that I

appointed Dr Coffin, Dr Skeleton, and Dr Bulruddery, to hold a consultation upon my case this morning; for, I have found so much benefit from Dr Last's medicine, that I think he will be the properest person to find out what's the matter with me.

Nan. Well, but, sir, give me leave to tell you, that Dr Last was very far from my thoughts, when we began this conversation. In short, papa, all this while you have been talking of one person, and I of another.

Pru. Poh, poh, madam, make yourself easy; my master can have no such ridiculous design as he has been mentioning to you—Marry a young lady of family and fortune to a scoundrel quack!

Ail. And what business have you to be meddling, impudence!

Pru. No business at all, sir; but, if you are really serious in your design about this marriage, give me leave to ask you, what can have put it into your head?

Ail. You have nothing to do with that——I have told the girl the party I propose for her is rich; but if you must know what most inclined, and, indeed, determined me, as it were, to accept of Dr Last for a son-in-law, is the number of invaluable secrets he possesses; and this alliance will intitle me to take his medicines gratis, as my various infirmities may require——a thing that we ought all to consider, my last year's apothecary's bill amounting to two hundred and nineteen pounds four shillings and eleven-pence.

Pru. A very pretty reason for marrying your daughter to a quack, indeed! But, after all, sir, tell me, upon your honour, now, does any thing ail you?

Ail. Eh! how! any thing ail me?

Pru. Ay, sir, are you sick in earnest? and, if so, what's the matter with you?

Ail. It's my misfortune not to know—Would to Heaven I did!—But to cut short all these impertinences, look you, daughter, I lay my commands upon you to prepare yourself to receive the husband I propose for you.

Pru. And I, madam, on my part, command you to have nothing to do with him.

[*Going off.*

Ail. Why, you impudent slut, shall a chambermaid take the liberty——

Pru. She shan't marry the quack.

Ail. Shan't she? we'll see that, if I get near enough to lay my cane across your shoulders.

[*Rising in a fury.*

Nan. Dear sir——

Pru. Oh, don't hinder him, madam; give him leave to come; he's welcome to do his worst.

Ail. If I lay hold of you———

[*Following her.*

Pru. I say I won't let you do a foolish thing, if I can help it. [*Getting behind a chair.*

Ail. Come hither, come hither. [*Still following her.*] Nancy, stop her there; don't let her pass.

Pru. I believe no father but yourself ever thought of such a thing.

Ail. Help me to catch her, daughter, or I'll never give you my blessing.

Pru. Never mind him, madam.

Ail. An audacious, impudent, insolent———

Pru. Ay, ay, you may abuse me, if you please; but I won't give my consent to the match for all that.

Ail. Cockatrice, jade, slut! [*Chasing her round the stage.*] Oh, oh, I can support it no longer; she has killed, she has murdered me.

[*Falls into his chair.*

Pru. Your humble servant, sweet sir—Come away, madam. [*Exeunt* PRU. *and* NAN.

Ail. Love! wife! Mrs Ailwou'd!

Enter MRS AILWOU'D.

Mrs Ail. How now!

Ail. Oh, lamb, lamb! come hither, if you love me!

Mrs Ail. What's the matter with my poor dear!

Ail. Help me, sweetest!

Mrs Ail. I will help thee; what's the matter?

Ail. Lamb!

Mrs Ail. Well, my heart!

Ail. They have been teazing and fretting me here out of the small portion of life and spirit I have left.

Mrs Ail. No, sweet, I hope not! Who has angered thee?

Ail. That jade, Prudence. She is grown more saucy and impudent than ever!

Mrs Ail. Don't put yourself in a passion with her, my soul!

Ail. I don't believe I shall ever recover it.

Mrs Ail. Yes, yes, compose yourself.

Ail. She has been contradicting me——

Mrs Ail. Don't mind her.

Ail. And has had the impudence to tell me I'm not sick; when you know, my lamb, how it is with me.

Mrs Ail. I know, my heart, very well, you are feeble and weak—Heaven help thee!

Ail. That jade will bring me to my grave. She is the cause of half the phlegm I breed; and I have desired, a hundred and a hundred times, that you would turn her off.

Mrs Ail. My child, there are no servants but have their faults; and we must endure their bad qualities, that we may have the use of their good ones. However, I will give Mrs Prudence a lecture for her impertinence, I assure you—Who's there? Prudence, I say!

Enter PRUDENCE.

Pru. Did you call me, madam?

[*Very demurely.*

Mrs Ail. Come hither, mistress—What is the meaning, that you fret and thwart your master, and put him into passions?

Pru. Who, I, madam! Bless my soul, I don't know what you mean! I'm sure my study, morning, noon, and night, is how to please and obey him.

Ail. Don't believe her, my dear; she's a liar; she neither pleases nor obeys me, and has behaved in the most insolent manner.

Mrs Ail. Well, my soul, I'm sure what you say is right; but compose yourself. Look you, Prudence, if ever you provoke your master again, I'll turn you out of doors. Here, give me his pillows, and help me to settle him in his chair—He sits I know not how—Pull your night-cap over your ears, my dear. There's nothing gives people cold so much as letting wind in at their ears.

Ail. Ah! my love, I shall never be able to repay all the care you take of me.

Mrs Ail. Raise yourself a little, that I may put this under you—this behind your back—and this to lean your head upon.

Pru. And this to cover your brains.

[*Claps a pillow rudely on his head.*

Ail. You cursed jade! do you want to stifle me?

[*Gets up in a passion, throws the pillows at her, and drives her out.*]

Mrs Ail. Hold, hold! what did she do to you?

Ail. Do to me! the serpent! She'll be the death of me, if you continue to keep her in the house.

Mrs Ail. Well, but, jewel, you are too apt to flurry yourself.

Ail. My sweet, you are the only comfort I have; and, in order to requite your tenderness in the best manner I am able, I have resolved, as I have told you, to make my will.

Mrs Ail. Ah! don't talk to me in that manner! don't, Mr Ailwould, I beseech you, unless you have a mind to break my heart!

Ail. Alas! my love, we are all mortal; but don't cry, Biddy, for you'll make me weep, too.

Mrs Ail. Oh! oh! oh!

Ail. Nay, dearest——

Mrs Ail. You said something of your will, did'nt you?

Ail. I desired you would speak to your attorney about it.

Mrs Ail. Yes; but I cannot speak to him about any such thing; it would cut me to the heart.

Ail. It must be done, Biddy.

Mrs Ail. No, no, no. However, I have desired him to come hither to-day, and you may speak to him about it yourself.

Ail. I would fain be informed in what manner I may cut off my children, and leave all to you.

Mrs Ail. Alas! my dear, if you should be taken away, I'll stay no longer in the world.

Ail. My only concern, when I die, will be, that I never had a child by you; and Dr Bulruddery, the Irish physician, promised me I should have twins.

Mrs Ail. But do you think, my dear, that you will be able to cut off your two daughters, and leave me all?

Ail. If not my landed estate, at any rate I can leave you my ready money; and, by way of precaution, I will make over to you immediately four thousand pounds, which I have in the three per cents, and bonds for near the same sum, which I lent to sir Timothy Whisky.

Mrs Ail. I will have nothing to do with them indeed, Mr Ailwould; you shan't put them into my hands, I assure you; all the riches in the world will be nothing to me, if I lose you.—How much do you say you have in the three per cents?

Ail. Four thousand pounds, my love.

Mrs Ail. To talk to me of money, when I am deprived of the only person, with whom I could enjoy it!—And how much more in bonds?

Ail. About the same sum, sweet—but don't take on so, Biddy; pray now don't; you'll throw yourself into some illness; and to have us both sick——

Enter PRUDENCE.

Pru. Sir, there are the three doctors below, in the parlour, that were to call upon you this morning.

Ail. Ay, they are come to consult upon my case. I'm sorry I spoke to them; but it's too late now.

Pru. And there's another gentleman at the door, in a chariot, with Mr Trash the bookseller, who desired me to tell you he had brought Dr Last.

Ail. I hope the gentlemen in the parlour did not see him!

Pru. No, sir; no.

Ail. Very well, then shew the physicians up. Do you, my love, go and entertain Dr Last till I can come to you. I will dispatch these as soon as I can; but one must keep up the forms of civility. [*Exit* MRS AILWOULD.

Enter DR COFFIN, DR SKELETON, DR BULRUDDERY.

Cof. Mr Ailwould, your servant. I have obeyed your commands, you see; and am come, with my brothers Skeleton and Bulruddery, to have a consultation upon your case.—How do you find yourself this morning?

Ail. Pray, gentlemen, be seated—Why, really, doctor, I find myself but very indifferent.

Ske. How do you sleep, sir?

Ail. Very indifferently, doctor; chiefly broken slumbers.

Bul. And pray, how is your appetite?

Ail. Indifferent, very indifferent, indeed. I have made shift to get down a couple of dishes of chocolate this morning in bed; about two hours after, I had some tea and toast with my wife; just now, I swallowed, with much difficulty, a bason of soup: and I believe I shall hardly take any thing more till dinner.

Ske. But, Mr Ailwould, what are your chief complaints?

Ail. Really, doctor, I am afraid my disorder is a complication. Sometimes I think it is the gout, sometimes the rheumatism, sometimes the dropsy, and sometimes I feel myself in a high fever: however, gentlemen, Dr Coffin here has been long my good friend and physician; and, by the help of the intelligence he can give you about my constitution, your art and experience may perhaps enable you to find out what's the matter with me; so I leave you to your consultation. Gentlemen, your servant. [AILWOULD, *seeing the doctors as he goes out, drops a guinea.*] Stay, doctor, I'll take it up for you.

Ske. Sir, I thank you; but I think there was another dropt.

Ail. No, there wasn't.

Ske. Why, I have but two.

Ail. But two! Oh! oh!

[*Gives him another. Exit.*

DR COFFIN, DR SKELETON, *and* DR BULRUDDERY, *seat themselves with great ceremony; then, after a short silence—*

Ske. Brother Coffin, shall I trouble you for a pinch of your—[*Taking snuff.*] Havannah, I see.

Cof. Brought me from thence by a captain, who assisted in taking the place.

Ske. [*Sneezes.*] Devilish strong!

Bul. I have often, Dr Skeleton, had it in my head to ask some of the faculty, what can be the reason, that, when a man happens to sneeze, all the company bows.

Ske. Sneezing, Dr Bulruddery, was a mortal symptom, that attended a pestilential disease, which formerly depopulated the republic of Athens; ever since, when that convulsion occurs, a short ejaculation is offered up, that the sneezeing or sternuting party may not be afflicted with the same distemper.

Bul. Upon my conscience, a very learned account! Ay, and a very civil institution, too. I can't help thinking, doctor, but the gentlemen of our profession must thrive much better in them there foreign parts than at home: Now, because why, one hears of plagues and pestilences, and such like kind of disorders, that attack a whole nation at once. Now, here, you know, we are obliged to pick up patients one by one, just as a body can get them.

Cof. Ay, doctor; and, since the great increase of this town, the sick lie so scattered, that one pair of horses are scarce sufficient for a physician but in moderate practice.

Ske. True; why, there was yesterday, the first pulse I felt belonged to a lad with the measles in Dean's yard, Westminster: from thence I set out between seven and eight, my wig fresh powdered, and my horses in spirits; I turned at Charingcross for the New Buildings; then run through the Holborn division, crossed the Fleet-market, and penetrated into the city as far as White-chapel; then made a short trip to the wife of a saleman, who had the gout in her stomach, at Wapping; from thence returned through Cornhill, Temple-Bar, and the Strand, and finished my last prescription, between five and six, for a tradesman in Cockspur street, who had burst a vein in hallooing at the Brentford election.

Bul. Upon my conscience, a long tour!

Ske. Long! Why, upon the most moderate calculation, I could not, before I sat down to my soup, have run up less than thirty pair of stairs; and my horses must have trotted, taking in cross streets and turnings, at least eighteen miles and three quarters.

Bul. Without doubt. But you was talking of Brentford. Don't you look upon a contested election as a good thing to the faculty, doctor?

Ske. If you mean to us of the college, Dr Bulruddery, little or nothing: if, indeed, there should happen to be warm work at the hustings, the corporation of surgeons may pick up some practice; though I don't look upon any of these public transactions as of any great use to our body in general. Lord mayor's day, indeed, has its merit.

Cof. Yes; that turns to account.

Ske. Dr Doseum and I were making, t'other morning at Batson's, a short calculation of what value that festival might be to the whole physical tribe.

Bul. Is it a secret to what you made it amount?

Ske. Why, what with colds caught on the water before dinner, repletion and indigestion at dinner, inebriety after dinner (not to mention the ball in the evening), we made that day and its consequences—for, you know, there are fine foundations laid for future disorders, especially if it turns out an easterly wind——

Bul. Does that make any difference?

Ske. Infinite; for when they come out of the hall, in a fine perspiration, from the heat of the room and exercise, should the wind miss them in crossing Cateaton street, it's sure to lay hold of them in turning the corner into Cheapside—

Cof. Without doubt.

Ske. We estimated the whole profit to physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, chemists, drug-

gists, and nurses, at eleven thousand, six hundred, seventy-three pounds, fourteen shillings, and threepence three-farthings.

Enter AILWOULD.

Ail. Gentlemen, I beg pardon for this interruption; but you have been consulting upon my case, and I have some particular reasons for coming thus suddenly, to desire to know what opinion you have yet been able to form?

Cof. [*To* SKELETON.] Come, sir.

Ske. No, sir; pray do you speak.

Cof. Before my senior! pray, excuse me.

Ske. [*To* BULRUDDERY.] Doctor——

Bul. The devil burn myself if I do!

Ail. Nay, pray, gentlemen, leave these ceremonies; and, if you have been able to form any opinion, instruct me.

Cof. Why, really, sir, to tell you the truth—Brother Skeleton——

Ske. We have not yet, with all the observations we have been able to make upon your case and complaints—I say, sir—and, after the most abstruse disquisitions, we have not as yet been able to form any opinion at all.

Ail. Well, this is all I want to be acquainted with; because, if you have not been able to form any opinion, I have been happy enough to meet with a physician that has.—Pray, sir, do me the favour to walk in here.

Enter DR LAST, *bowing with great state to* DR COFFIN, DR SKELETON, DR BULRUDDERY, *and* AILWOULD.

Ail. This, gentlemen, is Dr Last; and he assures me, that my disorder is a confirmed jaundice.

Doctors. A jaundice!—ha, ha, ha!

Dr Last. What do you grin at? I says he has the janders, and I'll uphold it. I'll lay you fifty pounds he has the janders, and the gentleman shall hold the stakes himself.

Cof. Well, but Mr Ailwould, this is altogether ridiculous. Did you ever see a man of your colour with the jaundice?

Ail. Why, that's true; [*Turning to* LAST.] every one tells me, that I have a florid complexion; now the jaundice gives a yellow hue: Will you be so good as to explain that?

Dr Last. Well, so I can, but not for the doctors. If I does it, it's all entirely to oblige you.

Ske. We shall hear how the impudent rascal will bring himself off.

Dr Last. There are two sorts of janders; the yallar, and the grey.

Bul. The black, I believe you mean, honey?

Dr Last. No, I don't.

Cof. But you must, sir; there is no such thing as the grey jaundice.

Ske. Oh! gentlemen, the doctor means the iron-grey, and that's almost black, you know.

Dr Last. They only does this to put me out now, because I'm no collegion.

Ail. Well, pray doctor, go on with your explanation.

Dr Last. Well, I says then—[*To* AILWOULD, *who turns about for something.*] I won't talk without you minds—the yallar janders, I say, is—the yallar janders is, as if so be——

Cof. Why, you were talking of the grey jaundice this moment.

Dr Last. No, I was'nt; I did'nt say a word of the gray janders—did I, Mr Ailwould?—It's the yallar janders.—I knows well enough what I'm about, if you'll let me alone.

Cof. Well, what of the yallar janders?

Dr Last. Why, I won't tell you——I won't say a word more now; if you thinks to profit, you're mistaken; you shan't learn nothing from me.

Cof. You're a bloody impudent fellow!

Dr Last. I does my cures no purchase no pay; and which of you can say that? [*Turning to* AILWOULD.] Many a one of them comes to ax my advice and assistance, when they don't know what to do themselves.

Cof. Come, come, friend, we know you.

Dr Last. Well, and I knows you—Pray, Dr Coffin, did'nt you attend one Mrs Greaves, a tallow-chandler's widow, that lodged at the pork-shop in Fetter-lane? and did'nt she send for me after you gave her over?

Cof. Yes; and she died in two days.

Dr Last. Well, so she did;—but that was no fault of mine; she should have sent for me first. What could I do for her, after you had killed the poor dear soul?

Cof. But, Mr Ailwould, we are come here to consult upon your case; and if you permit us, we are willing.

Ail. O! nothing I desire so much; and, to assist you, I'll leave this gentleman; he may give you further reasons for what he advances.

Ske. What, sir! do you think we'll consult with a quack?

Bul. Ay! do you think we'll be after consulting with a quack?

Dr Last. I'm no quack.—I have been regularly submitted; and I'll persecute you for your words in Westminster-hall.

Cof. Mr Ailwould, we are your humble servants.

Ail. Well, but, gentlemen, your fees; you'll return them, I hope?

Cof. Return our fees, sir!

Bul. Return our fees! Arrah, is the man mad?

Ske. Sir, it is a thing entirely out of the course of practice. We wish you a good morning.

[COF. BUL. *and* SKE. *go out with great formality.*

Ail. Why then, gentlemen, your servant, and good morning to you. Let them go; I'm glad we have got rid of them at any rate.

Dr Last. Here, you Coffin——

Ail. Pray let them alone now.

Dr Last. I would send him a challenge, if I was not afraid of being committed.

Ail. A challenge! Why, did you ever fight?

Dr Last. Yes; I had like to be killed two or three times; but I never was.

Ail. It was very well for me, I'm sure.

Dr Last. You must think they all hates me, because I out-does them in curing; and they are ostentious in their own way, and won't be learned.

Ail. And so, doctor, you are really of opinion, that I have a disposition to the jaundice?

Dr Last. Yes, you have; and it's one of the six and twenty disorders specified in my advertisement; and I challenge all England to do the like, to cure six and twenty disorders with one medicine, without confinement, or hinderance of business, or knowledge of a bedfellow. You understand me? for that's in it too, if you have any remains lurking in your blood from bad treatment.

Ail. No, no; Heaven be thanked! I never had any such thing in my life.

Dr Last. So much the better for you; but if you had, I could soon set you to rights again. —Why, there was three affidavys in the paper last Wednesday, acknowledging benefits received from me; one from a journeyman tailor, bed-rid with the rheumatiss; another from a hackney-coach-man that had been three times tapped for the dropsy, and one from a child's mother that I cured of the dry gripes.

Ail. Well, doctor, if you will now come into the next room, I will introduce you to my daughter.

Dr Last. What! in this trim? I would not for fifty guineas; besides I am going to see a gentlewoman, that I've got in hand for an impostor;—but, I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll dress myself, and come to you in the evening.

Ail. Well, do so, then, if it be more convenient to you.—But stay, doctor, your paper of directions orders your medicine to be taken only every three hours; now, as I have some spare time on my hands, suppose I was to take, in the intervals, a mug or two of the dog and duck water, or Islington Spa, or Bagnige Wells, by way of diluting?

Dr Last. You must'nt take nothing by way of dissolution, but a few broth made with vermin's jelly.

Ail. Have you any objection, then, to my going to Chelsea, to be fumigated at Dominicetti's?

Dr Last. Domini devil's! don't go near him. Is it to be sweated you wants? If that be all, I can sweat you myself. Do you chuse to be sweated?

Ail. Why, if I thought it would do me any good——

Dr Last. Well, I'll consider of it;—but remember, Mr Ailwould, I have taken you in hand now, and if you go to be purged, or puked, or buy a sup of physic from any one else—but I suppose you knows better what belongs to the charakter of a gentleman. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I—*Another room in* AILWOULD'S *house.*

Enter PRUDENCE, *followed by* HARGRAVE.

Pru. COME, sir, follow me; I'll venture to bring you in, since you've ventured to knock at the door.

Har. But tell me, my best girl, cannot you contrive to make me happy in the sight of your charming mistress?

Pru. No, Mr Hargrave, I cannot, indeed! you have been told so a thousand times already: I sent you word so by your servant this morning, but you wont be satisfied; and, as if you had not been imprudent enough already, you are now come here in person to put the finishing stroke to our ruin.

Har. No, my good Prue, I was aware of that, and am not come here in my own character, but as a friend of your young lady's Italian master, who has given me leave to say he has sent me in his place.

Pru. That's more forecast than I thought you capable of. But why have you been so negligent? did not you tell my mistress, that you would make a formal proposal to her father?

Har. True—Nor is it my fault that it has not been done; I spoke to Mr Friendly, Mr Ailwould's brother-in-law, who assured me he would make it his business to come here this day for that purpose.

Pru. Ay; but this day is too late, it should have been done yesterday: for now her father is going to marry her to another person—a rascal quack—Though, I think, if we could set my master against him, which would be no very hard matter——

Har. As how?

Pru. I don't know any method so sure as by the help of another quack; for he falls in love with every new medicine he hears of.

Har. Say you so? Gad I have a good comical fellow for my servant, and there is a thought come into my head——

Pru. Hush! here's my master; step into the next room a little, while I prepare him for your reception. [*Exit* HAR.

Enter AILWOULD.

Ail. Dr Last directed me, during the operation of his medicine, to take ten or twelve turns about the room; but I forgot to ask him whether it would be most efficacious, the long way, or the broad—I wish I had asked him that.

Pru. Sir, here is a——

Ail. Speak low, hussy; you are enough to shock my brains—You don't consider, that it is not fit to bawl in the ears of sick people!

Pru. I was going to tell you, sir——

Ail. Speak low, I say.

Pru. Sir——[*Speaks so low as not to be heard.*

Ail. Eh!

Pru. I was going to tell you——

[*Very low.*

Ail. What is it you say?

Pru. [*Very loud.*] I say, here's a man without wants to speak with you.

Ail. Well, you devil! let him come in.

Pru. [*As loud as she can bawl.*] Come in, sir.

Ail. Oh! my head, my head!

Enter HARGRAVE.

Har. Mr Ailwould——

Pru. Don't speak so loud, for fear of shocking my master's brains.

Har. I am very glad to find you out of bed, and to see that you grow better.

Pru. What do you mean by growing better?—it's false, my master's always very ill.

Har. I don't know how that may be—but I was told he was better; and I think he looks pretty well.

Pru. Poh! you're blind, he looks as bad as possible; and they are impertinent people, that say he mends: he grows worse and worse.

Ail. She's in the right of it.

Pru. He walks, eats, and drinks like other men; but that's no reason why he should not be in a bad state of health.

Ail. 'Tis very true.

Har. I can only say then, sir, that I am extremely sorry for your indisposition; and hope you will soon get the better of it.

Ail. And now compliments are past, sir—Pray may I take the liberty to desire to know who you are?

Har. Sir, I come here on the part of Miss Ailwould's Italian master, who is gone for some time into the country, and sends me, being his intimate friend, to continue her lessons; lest, by interrupting them, she should forget what she has already learned.

Ail. Very well; call Nancy.

Pru. I believe, sir, it will be better to take the gentleman into her chamber.

Ail. No, let her come here.

Pru. He can't give her her lesson so well, if he is not alone with her.

Ail. I warrant you.

Pru. Besides, it will only disturb you in the condition you are in, to have people talking in the room.

Ail. Leave that to me—Where is my daughter?—Rot you, get out of my sight, and let me know when Dr Last comes! [*Exit* PRUE.

Enter NANCY.

Nancy, my dear, your Italian master is gone into the country, and has sent a gentleman to teach you in his room.

Nan. Oh, heavens!

Ail. What's the matter? Why this astonishment?

Nan. Because, papa——

Ail. Because what?

Nan. Lord, sir! the most surprising thing happens here!

Ail. So it seems, indeed.

Nan. I dreamt last night, papa, that I was in a crowd coming out of a play-house, where a rude fellow attempted to lay hold of me; when a gentleman, exactly like this, came to my assistance, and rescued me from the ruffian's hands; and I am surprised, papa, to see before me the very same person I fancied in my dream——

Ail. Did you ever hear such an idiot as it is?

Har. I count myself extremely fortunate, madam, to have employed your thoughts either sleeping or waking; and should esteem myself particularly happy to relieve you from any distress, which accident might throw you into: for, I assure you, madam—

Ail. Why now, sir, you are rather more foolish than she—But, pray, have done with your nonsense, both the one and the other: and you, sir, if you please, give the girl her lesson.

Har. You know, ma'am, a great man formerly said, that if he spoke to the gods, he would speak Spanish; to men, French; but women, Italian, as the properest language for love.

Ail. A strange round-about way of beginning!

Har. If he was to speak to his horse, indeed, he said, he would speak high Dutch; as, for example, Das dick der donder schalq.

Ail. So, you won't have done fooling?

Har. Pray, sir, give me leave; every master has his method—No doubt, madam, you have been informed, that the adjective must agree with the substantive; as thus—Nanetta bella, beautiful Nancy, [*Softly to her.*] that is you, my

charmer—Amante fidele, Faithful lover—[*Softly to her.*] that's me, my charmer, who doats upon you more than life. [AILWOULD *coming close to listen,* HARGRAVE *raises his voice.*] Now these, ma'am, must agree in gender, number, and case.

Ail. Ay, that's right enough; I remember that, when I was learning grammar myself.

Har. Come, madam, we'll take a verb active, and begin, if you please, with Amo, to love—— Have you any objection to that?

Nan. By no means, sir.

Har. Then, pray give a little attention, and conjugate after me, that you may catch the accent —Io amo, I love.

Nan. Io amo, I love.

Har. O fy! that's not a proper tone—You'll pardon me for reprimanding miss before you. ——You must pronounce the words with more tenderness, ma'am: take notice of me—Io amo, I love.

Nan. [*Very tenderly.*] Io amo, I love.

Ail. I wont have her pronounce it any more; I don't know what words you'll have the impudence to teach her presently!

Enter PRUDENCE.

Pru. Sir!

Ail. What now?

Pru. Might I speak with you, sir?

Ail. Speak with me!

Pru. If it won't disturb you, sir.

Ail. A curse light on you! What is it you want?

Pru. To tell you something, sir, if you won't fly in a passion.

Ail. Well, tell it.

Pru. Lord, sir! one does not know how to face you; you really frighten me out of my wits.

Ail. She won't speak now!

Pru. Yes, sir, I—will speak. [*Altering her tone.*] There's Dr Last below, as fine as a mountebank.

Ail. Daughter, go into your chamber; and I must beg of you, sir, to take your leave; and pray let your friend know, that neither he, nor his substitute, need continue their visits for the future. [*Exit* NANCY.

Har. [*Aside*] Well, my good old gentleman, you shall hear from me again sooner than you imagine; for, since the way has been pointed out to me, I will make a bold push to drive this quack out of the house. [*Exit.*

Enter DOCTOR LAST, *drest in a tawdry manner, followed by a black boy.*

Dr Last. An impudent rascal has thrown a dead cat into my chariot, and hit me such a douse on the nose, besides splatching me!

Ail. Doctor Last—

Dr Last. Mr Ailwould—Sir, I pay you my compliments—Pompey, bring the carriage for me at six o'clock—and, do you hear? call at Coven-Garden market for the yerbs, and put them into the boot.

Ail. Upon my word! [*Admiring* LAST.] Lord, Lord! what an advantage dress is!

Dr Last. To tell you the truth, I got this suit of cloaths a bargain: they belonged to a gentleman as died under my hands.

Ail. Prudence, go and desire your young mistress to come hither.

Pru. Dr Last—sir, your most obedient. [*Exit.*

Ail. You impudent, saucy—

Dr Last. Never mind her; Lord! she meant no harm—I'm too good natured to take notice of every trifle—I'm one of the best natured fellows, I believe, that ever was born—Why, I'm like a dog in my own house; I never troubles myself about nothing; all I desire is, to see things handsome, and they give me whatever they please.

Ail. Well, I think my daughter will, in that respect, match you to a tittle, for she's as good-natured a girl as lives.

Dr Last. I'll tell you a thing you'll be glad to hear; I believe I shall come out with a new medicine in a day or two.

Ail. I'll take it—What is it?

Dr Last. Essence of cucumber.

Ail. Of cucumber!

Dr Last. Ay, for the heartburn.

Ail. I'm very often troubled with that disorder; but will it be good for nothing else?

Dr Last. Yes, it will be good for the cramp.

Ail. I've had an odd pain in the ball of my foot all day; I don't know what it may turn to.

Dr Last. I wish Miss Nancy would come, for I think we should prove agreeable, and we'd fix things directly; I'll settle whatever you please upon her, for I have neither chick nor child, but my old mother.

Ail. Here she is.

Enter NANCY *and* PRUDENCE.

Nancy, this is Dr Last.

Dr Last. No offence, miss, I hope? [*Goes up, and kisses her.*] I thinks, Mr Ailwould, she's very much like you, only she wants a scrap of colour; but I'll give her a bottle of stuff when we're married, that in three doses will make her cheeks as red as a rose.

Ail. Why don't you speak to the doctor, Nancy?

Nan. I don't know what to say, sir.

Dr Last. Let her alone, let her alone; we'll talk fast enough, when we're better acquainted —I fancy, Mr Ailwould, we shall have very fine children; I had three as beautiful babes by my last spouse, as ever a woman brought into the world.

Ail. I hope they're dead, doctor?

Dr Last. Yes, yes; I told you so a bit ago.

Sweet pretty little angels! they all lies in Pancridge church-yard with their poor dear mammy.

Ail. In Pancras church-yard!

Dr Last. Yes, there's tomb-stones over every one of them.

Ail. Tomb-stones!

Dr Last. Ay.

Ail. Is there though?

Dr Last. Yes; what's the matter with you?

Ail. Heigh ho!

Dr Last. Have you got the colic?

Ail. No.

Nan. Has any sudden illness seized you, sir?

Ail. No, only low spirits. I think somehow, I shall be buried in Pancras church-yard myself.

Pru. Lord, sir! how can you take such things into your head?

Ail. I wish there had been no talk about tomb-stones.

Pru. Here's my lady.

Enter MRS AILWOULD.

Ail. Mrs Ailwould, this is Dr Last.

Mrs Ail. I have seen the doctor before, my dear; but what's the matter with you, eh?

Dr Last. Nothing, madam, nothing; he has only got a little fit of the horrors: let him alone, he'll come to himself again by and by.

Mrs. Ail. I hope, daughter-in-law, you are sensible of the goodness of this gentleman, in taking you without a portion?

Dr Last. Yes, yes; and I hope my parson proves agreeable to her. Have you seen my picture, miss, that's in the expedition-room at Spring-gardens?—every one says it's monstrous like me. Take her to see it, do, it will cost but a shilling; you'll easily know it—it's o'the same side with the image there—Venus the methodist, I thinks they call it.

Ail. Well, but, doctor, give me leave to ask you, and don't be offended at my being a little particular, on account of my girl; I know you have realized something considerable: but, how have you laid out your money? Have you ever a scrap of land?

Dr Last. Why, as far as this here, there's my place by Hounslow, I bought it out and out; the whole concern costs me upwards of fifteen hundred pounds, with my pond and my pigeon-house, and———

Pru. Have you any fish in your pond, doctor?

Dr Last. No, my dear, its not deep enough; besides, its in the road, and I'm afraid they'd be stole: but I have pigs and pigeons; and next summer I shall make a new reproach to my house, with a fistula that will give us a view of all the gibbets upon the heath—then there's a large running ditch that I'll make into a turpentine river.

Ail. Come, Nancy, let me have the satisfaction of seeing you give your hand to Dr Last.

Nan. Sir——

Ail. Nay, nay, no coying.

Nan. Dear sir, let me beg of you not to be so precipitate, but allow the gentleman and me sufficient time to know one another, and try if our inclinations are mutual.

Dr Last. My inclinations are mutual, miss, and not to be changed; for the fire of love, as I may say, is shot from your beautiful eyes into my heart: and I could say more—if it was not out of respect to the company.

Mrs Ail. Perhaps, my dear, Miss Nancy has fixed her inclinations somewhere else; and, like a dutiful daughter, made a choice for herself.

Nan. If I had, madam, it would be such a one as neither reason nor honour would make me ashamed of.

Mrs Ail. But if I were in your papa's place, miss, I would make you take the person I thought proper for your husband, or I know what I'd do.

Nan. O, madam, nobody doubts your affection; but, perhaps, you may be baulked in the favour you design me.

Ail. Well, but stay; methinks I make but a whimsical sort of a figure between you both.

Nan. The duty of a daughter, madam, is not unlimited; and there are certain cases, to which neither law nor reason can make it extend.

Mrs Ail. That is to say, you are very willing to be married, but you are not willing your father should have any hand in the matter?

Ail. Dr Last, I beg your pardon for all this.

Dr Last. Let them go on! I likes to hear them.

Mrs Ail. Your insolence is insufferable, child!

Nan. I am very sensible, madam, you would be glad to provoke me to make you some impertinent answer; but I tell you before-hand, I shall be careful not to give you that advantage over me.

Mrs Ail. You don't know, my dear, that you are very silly.

Nan. 'Tis labour lost, madam; I shall make no answer.

Mrs Ail. You have a ridiculous pride about you—a vain self-sufficiency, which makes you shocking to every body.

Nan. I tell you, madam, once more, it won't do; I will preserve my temper in spite of you: and, to deprive you of all hopes of succeeding against me, I'll take myself out of your sight immediately.

Ail. Hark'e, Nancy, no more words; resolve to marry this gentleman within three days, or I'll turn you out to starve in the streets.

[*Exit* NANCY.

Mrs Ail. A little impudent, saucy minx!

Dr Last. She has a purdigious deal of tongue for such a young crater!

Ail. My lamb, don't make yourself uneasy

about the baggage; I'll bring her to her senses, I'll warrant you.

Mrs Ail. Indeed, my dear, you don't know how I'm shocked at her behaviour.

Ail. Are you shocked, love?

Mrs Ail. Yes, that I am, to the soul! I thought she wanted to insinuate that I did not love you, my dear; and any thing of that kind is worse to me than ten thousand daggers!

Ail. She's going to faint.

Dr Last. Let me feel her pulse.

Ail. A gluss of water here!

Dr Last. No, no, give her a glass of cherry brandy; I'm no friend to drenching Christians' bowels with water, as if they were the tripes of a brute beast.

Mrs Ail. Mr Ailwould, permit me to go into my own room a little, to recover myself.

Ail. Do so, my love.

Dr Last. And, do you hear, madam, take a dram, as I bids you; a little rum and sugar, if you have any in the house; that's what I generally swallows, and I always find the good effects of it. [*Exit* MRS AILWOULD.

Enter PRUDENCE.

Ail. How now?

Pru. Sir, a gentleman, that says he comes from your brother, Mr Friendly, desires to see you.

Ail. Who is he? what would he have?

Pru. I don't know—He cuts a droll figure—Here he is, sir.

Ail. Get out of the room.

Enter WAG, *in disguise.*

Wag. Sir, I'm your most obedient.

Ail. Your servant, sir.

Wag. By what I perceive, sir, I have not the honour to be known to you—my name is Scower, sir; and I come recommended by your brother, Mr Friendly, and study the practice of physic.

Ail. Sir, your servant.

Wag. I observe you look very earnestly at me, sir; what age do you think I am of?

Dr Last. Hold, let me tell him—What age are you of—You are about four-and-twenty, or thereaways.

Wag. By the Lord, I'm above fourscore!

Dr Last. That's a damned lie, I'm sure!

Ail. Hold, doctor! perhaps he has lived all his life upon tincture of sage.

Wag. Sage! a fiddle! I have secrets myself that will keep me alive these hundred years.

Dr Last. I suspect this is the soldier that lives in the Old Bailey. You'll see how I'll make him expose himself. You say you're a doctor? who made you so?

Wag. Sir, I am a travelling doctor; and, at present, have the honour of being physician in ordinary to one emperor, four kings, three electors, and I don't know how many prince palantines, margraves, bishops, and vulgar highnesses; passing from town to town, from kingdom to kingdom, to find out patients worthy of my practice, and fit to exercise the great and noble secrets of my art. I scorn to amuse myself with the little fry of common distempers, the trifles of rheumatisms, scurvies, and megrims; give me your diseases of importance, good purple fevers, good pleurisies, with inflammations of the lungs: these are what please me; these are what I triumph over.

Dr Last. Ax him, can he bleed and draw teeth?—I dare to say he knows nothing of chirurgery.

Wag. Have you never heard of my black powder that is taken like sauff, and purges by the smell, provided that, at the same time, you swallow three large glasses of laxative tisan?

Dr Last. Then its the tisan that does it! Mark that! O! he's quite a cheat!

Wag. Let me feel your pulse—Come, beat as you should do—[*Feeling his pulse in a ridiculous manner; at the same time humming a tune.*]

Ail. Why, sir, one would think you were playing upon the spinet?

Wag. Even so, sir; for I do not, like other physicians, with a watch in my hand, determine the state of the pulse by that fallible measurer of time.

Ail. How then?

Wag. By a tune; which, I believe, you will allow to be a discovery new, and entirely my own. If the pulse moves in concert with the minuet in Ariadne, I am sure that the patient is well. Let me see, sir—Tol, lol, de-rol—there we dropped a crotchet. Tol, lol, de-rol—there we mounted a minum. Tol, lol, lol—and there a semi-demi quaver is missing.

Ail. A semi-demi quaver!

Wag. Stay!—Let me consider—two bars and a half—Who is your physician?

Ail. Dr Last.

Wag. What! that little fellow?

Dr Last. Little fellow? What do you mean by that?

Ail. Nay, gentlemen——

Wag. Come, come, let us mind our business. What does he say is the matter with you?

Ail. Why, sir, he tells me I've got the jaundice.

Wag. He's an ass!

Dr Last. Am I so?

Wag. Mr Ailwould, look in my face. [*Touching him here and there with his finger.*] How do you find yourself?

Ail. Why, I don't know! I find myself someway odd.

Wag. Just as I suspected: you have got the dropsy!

Ail. Eh! the dropsy?

Wag. Why, don't you see what a swelled belly you have, and your eyes starting out of your head?

Ail. Really, doctor, I always thought you had mistaken my disorder.

Dr Last. He has no dropsy—he has not a sup of water in him. Let him be tapped to try; I'll stand to his tapping.

Wag. You are an ignoramus!—Let us hear a little what are your complaints.

Ail. I have every now and then a pain in my head.

Wag. Dropsy.

Ail. Sometimes a mist before my eyes.

Wag. Dropsy,

Ail. Sometimes a violent palpitation at my heart.

Wag. Dropsy.

Ail. At other times I am taken with a violent pain in my belly, as if it was the colic.

Wag. Dropsy again. You have a good appetite to what you eat?

Ail. Yes, sir.

Wag. Dropsy. You love to drink a glass of wine?

Ail. Yes.

Wag. That's the dropsy. You take a comfortable nap after dinner?

Ail. True, sir.

Wag. Dropsy! dropsy! dropsy!—All dropsy!

Dr Last. Well, if it be, can you cure him?

Wag. A quack like you would say, ay: but I sincerely tell the gentleman at once, he's a dead man.

Ail. Then, the Lord have mercy on me!

Wag. That is, I mean, he would be dead in twenty-four hours, if I was not to help him; but I have the only remedy in the world for it.

Dr Last. Don't believe him; he's a cheat!

Ail. Give it to me; I'll take it, let it be what it will.

Wag. Then, observe, I don't desire a brass farthing without you're cured.

Ail. Look you there, doctor!

Dr Last. Well, don't I do the same?

Wag. But, if you are cured, you must give me a hundred guineas.

Ail. You shall have the money.

Dr Last. It's too much; I'll do it for five.

Wag. I have been at a great deal of pains and trouble, and made many experiments, in order to find a radical cure for this disease, that should be at once safe, cheap, and easy. My first invention was a pump; by means of which, fixed in the belly of the patient, I meant to pump out the dropsical humour, as you would water out of the hold of a ship; threescore and eleven people died under the operation.

Ail. Well, what is the loss of a few individuals, for the general good of mankind? You brought it to perfection at last?

Wag. No; at last I found it was impracticable; yet I would have gone on in hopes, but people grew chicken-hearted, and would not let me try.

Dr Last. So they well might—You should not pump me in that manner for five thousand pound.

Wag. Well, sir, my next experiment was called the soaking operation; which was contrived thus: I made the patient swallow a piece of spunge fastened to a string, which, going down his throat into his stomach, I let lie there till I had absorbed or soaked up the watery humours, and then drew it up again, with all it's contents; repeating the operation till I had left the body as dry as an empty decanter.

Ail. Well, and what success?

Wag. Why, I had a great deal better success with this than the former: for I think it killed but four-and-twenty.

Dr Last. Well, take my advice, Mr Ailwould, neither be pumped nor soaked.

Wag. The gentleman has nothing to fear; what I shall make use of upon this occasion is my great driver, or essence infernalis.—You see this little phial?

Dr Last. Let me see it—and I'll make bold to taste it, too.—Don't touch it, Mr Ailwould! don't touch it! it's corroding supplement, and will throw you into a salvation.

Wag. Not a grain of mercury in it, upon my honour! nothing but simples.

Ail. Pray give the phial to me; I think I can distinguish: for I have taken a great many of these things.—I vow to man, it tastes to me like strong beer or porter!

Wag. [*Aside.*] By the Lord he has guessed it!—Observe me, sir, it is a tincture drawn from ratsbane, arsenic, laudanum, verdigrise, copperas, with a convenient mixture of the juice of hemlock. You see, sir, I despise quackery; I tell you fairly what my medicines are.

Dr Last. Medicines, do you call them?

Wag. Give it cat, dog, mouse, rat; or, in short, any creature, biped or quadruped, of the brute creation, they are immediately thrown into the most intolerable torments, swell like a tun, and burst before your eyes.

Ail. A fine medicine, indeed!

Wag. Well, I'll let you take the contents of this whole bottle; and if it does you any more harm than so much new milk, I'll give you leave to knock me down.

Ail. Knock you down!

Wag. Nay, more; if you had infirmities from head to foot, the first dose will cure you of every one of them.

Dr Last. Yes, indeed, I believe it would.

Wag. Tell me, Mr Ailwould, what do you do with this arm?

Ail. My arm!

Wag. Take my advice, cut off this arm immediately.

Ail. The deuce! Cut off my arm!

Wag. It is the new method of practice that I mean to introduce. Don't we prune trees of their branches, to make them more healthy? And, don't you see that this arm draws all the nourishment to itself, and hinders the other from thriving?

Ail. Ay, but I have occasion for my arm.

Wag. Here's an eye, too, which I would have instantly plucked out, were I in your place.—

Ail. Pluck out my eye!

Wag. Don't you see it injures the other, and occasions these mists you complained of but now Be guided by me, and have it taken away directly; you'll see the better with your left.

Dr Last. I tell you, Mr Ailwould, this is some cheat.

Ail. I begin to suspect so.—Hark'e, sirrah, who sent you here? Are you come to murder me?

Wag. Oh! Sir, if you're in a passion, your servant.

Dr Last. Ay, but you shan't get off so.—Stop thief!

Wag. Nay, then, I must take to my heels.

[*Throws his wig at Last, and runs off.*

Ail. Did you ever see such an impudent scoundrel?

Dr Last. Do you keep the wig—we can swear to the wig—while I follow, and find out who he is—I'm almost sure he's the soldier in the Old Bailey; for he has a spite against me, and employs old women to tear down my advertisements.

Enter FRIENDLY *and* PRUDENCE.

Ail. Ah!—I'm quite overcome! I can't support myself any longer.

Pru. Your brother, Mr Friendly, sir.

Friend. How now! What's the matter?

Ail. O! Mr Friendly, your servant—but I wonder you are not ashamed to see my face: did you think my sickly habit would not put me out of the world soon enough, but you must join with wretches to drive me hence?

Friend. I don't understand you.

Ail. How could you send me that wicked monster, who, under the name of a doctor, wanted to give me poison; to cut off my arms, thrust out my eyes, and so make me blind and lame?

Friend. I never sent you any physician!

Ail. No?—he pretended he came by your recommendation.

Friend. He's some impostor—and indeed, my dear brother, you lay yourself too open to the practice of such fellows, who are acquainted with your weakness, and take advantage of it.

Ail. My weakness is great, indeed, as you may see.

Friend. How do you find yourself to-day, then?

Ail. Extremely ill, indeed.

Friend. How! extremely!

Ail. In a condition so faint and feeble, that I am not able to stir.

Friend. Indeed!

Ail. I have scarce strength enough to speak to you.

Friend. I'm heartily sorry for it, brother, because I came to talk to you upon a matter of consequence; no less than to propose a match for my niece.

Ail. [*Rises in a violent passion.*] Brother, don't talk to me of that hussy; she's an impudent, ungrateful jade; I detest, I renounce her; and will own nobody for my friend, that speaks a word in her favour.

Friend. However, brother, I'm glad to find, that your strength returns a little, and that you have still got spirits enough to exert yourself: my visit has done you so much good at least; and to do you still more, I insist upon your coming with me into the garden immediately.

Ail. Into the garden!

Friend. Ay; a walk there will do you good.

Ail. I have not been in the open air these two months.

Friend. So much the worse for you.

Pru. So it is, Mr Friendly. Do, sir, be prevailed on by your brother.

Ail. I know I shall catch my death of cold.

Friend. I warrant you.

Ail. Well, come then. Prudence, give me my furred gown.

Friend. What! to go into the garden in the middle of July?

Ail. Ay, ay, I'll take care of myself in spite of you all.

Pru. Get him out at any rate. [*Aside.*]—Here's your gown, sir.

Ail. So—Let me wrap it close about me—Where are my flannel gloves.

Pru. Here, sir.

Ail. Now, pull down my night-cap, and put on my hat.

Friend. Why, brother, you're wrapt up like a Russian courier for a winter journey into Siberia?

Ail. You may say what you please.—Here, Prudence, tie a handkerchief about my neck.

Friend. Is that necessary, too?

Ail. Come, now, brother, I'll go with you, though I'm sure it will be the death of me.

[*Going off.*

Pru. Well, but, sir——

Ail. What's the matter?

Pru. You forgot, sir, that you can't walk without your cane.

Ail. That's true; give it me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A room in* AILWOULD'S *house with a door in the back.*

AILWOULD, *and* MRS AILWOULD.

Ail. WHERE art thou going abroad, my life?

Mrs Ail. To the Temple, my dear, to Mr Juggle the lawyer, to desire him to come here and make your will, since you will have it so.

Ail. That's right, lamb, that's right——

Mrs Ail. But an accident has happened, dearest, which I thought it my duty to inform you of before I went.—As I passed by your daughter Nancy's chamber, I saw a young fellow there in earnest conference with her.

Ail. How! with my daughter!

Mrs Ail. Yes; and I'm sure I saw the same young fellow, a little before, talking with your brother in the parlour.

Ail. And could you overhear what she and the young fellow were saying together?

Mrs Ail. No, sweetest; but your little daughter Polly was with them.

Ail. The child?

Mrs Ail. Aye, the child, my dear—forward enough of her age; I assure you she knows as much at five, as I did at fifteen——But I dare swear you may get every thing out of her.

Ail. Go, prithee, and send the little slut to me this instant.

Mrs Ail. My dear, I will—Polly! your papa wants you.

Ail. Bye, Biddy—— [*Exit.*

Enter POLLY.

Pol. Do you want me, papa?—My mamma says you want me.

Ail. Yes, hussy; come here——nearer.——What do you turn away for?—Look me in the face.

Pol. Well, papa.

Ail. So——

Pol. What, papa?

Ail. Have you nothing to tell me?

Pol. What should I tell you?

Ail. You know well enough, hussey.

Pol. Not I, indeed, and upon my word.

Ail. Is this the way you do what you're bid?

Pol. What?

Ail. Did not I order you to come and tell me immediately whatever you saw?

Pol. Yes, papa.

Ail. And have you done so?

Pol. Yes; I'm come to tell you every thing I've seen.

Ail. Very well.—What have you seen to-day?

Pol. I saw my lord mayor go by in his coach.

Ail. And nothing else?

Pol. No, indeed, indeed!

Ail. I shall make you alter your tone a little, I fancy, if I fetch a rod.

Pol. Oh, dear papa!

Ail. You baggage, you, why don't you tell me you saw a man in your sister's chamber?

Pol. Why, my sister bid me not, papa; but I'll tell you every thing.

Ail. Take care, then, for I have a way of knowing all; and if you tell me a lie——

Pol. But pray, papa, don't you go and tell my sister that I told you!

Ail. Never fear.

Pol. Well, then, papa, there came a man into my sister's chamber as I was there; I asked him what he wanted, and he told me he was her Italian master.

Ail. Oh, the matter's out, then!

Pol. My sister came in afterwards.

Ail. Well, and what did your sister say?

Pol. Why, first the man kissed her.

Ail. Did he so?

Pol. Yes, two or three times, but she was not willing; and then she said to him, go away, go away—and she said, she was frightened out of her wits—and she said, she was afraid you would come and catch her.

Ail. Well, and what then?

Pol. Why, he would not go away.

Ail. And—What did he say to her?

Pol. Say! He said—I don't know how many things to her.

Ail. Ay, but what?

Pol. Why, he said this and that, and t'other; he said, he loved her mightily; and that she was the prettiest creature in the world.

Ail. Well—and after that?

Pol. Why, after that, he took her by the hand.

Ail. And after that?

Pol. After that, he kissed her again.

Ail. And after that?

Pol. After that—Stay; O, after that, my mamma came, and he ran away.

Ail. And you saw no more?

Pol. No; indeed, and indeed, papa.

Ail. There's something, however, whispers in my ear that you have not told me all. This little finger——

Pol. O, that little finger's a story-teller.

Ail. Have a care!

Pol. Don't believe it, papa; it fibs, indeed!

Ail. Well, get you gone, then, and remember what I have said to you.

Pol. Yes, papa, yes; I'll remember. I am glad he did not whip me; I was afraid he would have whipped me. [*Exit.*

Enter FRIENDLY.

Friend. Come now, brother, I must insist upon it, that you will not put yourself in a passion; but sit down here, and let me resume the conversation which we just now broke off.

Ail. Well, come, let it be so.

Friend. You are to be cool now, remember.

Ail. Ay, ay, I'll be cool.

Friend. And to answer me without prevarication.

Ail. Good lord, yes! here's a terrible preamble, sure!

Friend. How comes it, then, brother, give me leave to ask you once more, that, being in the circumstances you are, and having no other children but two daughters, you can entertain the strange design of marrying your eldest in the manner you are going to dispose of her?

Ail. Pray, brother, how comes it, that I am master of my own family, and dispose of my children as I like?

Friend. Your wife, no doubt, is glad to get rid of her at any rate.

Ail. Oh! ay, now it comes——and the poor wife is to be dragged in! 'tis she does all the mischief, to be sure, and all the world will have it so.

Friend. No, no, brother; we'll leave her out of the question; she's a good woman, that has the best intentions in the world for your family, is free from all manner of self-interest, has a marvellous tenderness for you, and shows an inconceivable affection to your children, that's certain. We'll say no more, therefore, of her, but return to your daughter; but, pray, let me ask you, with what view would you marry her to this Dr Last?

Ail. With a view of having so skilful a physician as Dr Last related to me.

Friend. Heavens, brother! how can you talk so? Skilful! I never saw the man; but I am told, that, of all the quacks in town, numerous as they are, he is the most ignorant as well as the most impudent: but it is really shocking to humanity, to consider to what a head these dangerous cheats are arrived in this great city: and it is not less amazing, that people should confide their health, their most valuable possession, to wretches they would not trust with any thing else. In short, I know no way of putting a stop to their progress, but by an unlimited act against the vending of poisons, which, I think, would very fairly comprehend them.

Ail. Ha! You have made a very fine speech, now. Do you think, if the cures they perform were not wonderful, people would take their medicines so kindly? What has essence of water-dock done for the scurvy? What balsam of honey, in colds and consumptions? The stomach pills for colicky complaints? Then, you senseless idiot you, d'ye think his majesty would give his royal letters patent for pills, essences, electuaries, cordials, tinctures, quintessences, to poison his subjects? But to strike you dumb at once, is not that blessed medicine, baume de vie, in itself, a remedy for all disorders under Heaven?

Friend. All!

Ail. Look at the list of cures—then the reasoning's good—All disorders spring from the stomach——beaume de vie is a sovereign remedy for the stomach—and, therefore, cures all disorders.

Friend. If so, why don't you take it, and get rid of yours?

Ail. Why! why! there's no general rule without an exception.

Friend. Come, come, brother, the truth of it is, there's nothing the matter with you at all—and I desire no better proof of the excellency of your constitution, than that all the slops you have been taking these ten years have not burst, or otherwise destroyed you.

Ail. Here's Dr Last! he is so good as to come on purpose to administer his medicine to me himself. Pray now, brother, behave yourself properly.

Enter DR LAST, *with a vial in one hand, and a glass of water in the other.*

Dr Last. Come, Mr Ailwould——

Ail. Brother, with your leave.

Friend. What are you going to do now?

Ail. To take some of Dr Last's cordial; and let me prevail upon you to take a glass, too.

Dr Last. Do, sir, one dose; its as natural to a man's constitution as breast-milk: and, if you will take it for a continency, once you are a little manured to it, it will work the most surprisingest difference——

Friend. Pray, sir, what is it?

Dr Last. Sir, I would not tell you, if you were my father; no, nor king George—but I'll show you—You see this glass of New River water—its as transparent as rock crystal—Now, I puts twelve drops of my cordial into it——and there—its as fine asses milk as ever was tasted—I vow to the lord, there's worse sold for a shilling a pint, that comes from the beastis themselves!

Ail. Well, I believe that's very true.

Dr Last. I presume, by your wig, sir, that you belong to the law; and if you'll put yourself under my care, I'll give you something, for which you will be obliged to me; and yet its nothing but the juice of a simple yerb: but I've tried it upon several gentlemen in your way, who, from being sheep, as it were, have become as bold as lions.

Ail. Attend to this, brother, for it is worth listening to.

Dr Last. Then it is one of the beautifullest things upon yearth for the memory—There was a little boy, seven years of age, did not know one of his letters—His papa was angry, his mamma was uneasy———They bought him the pretty books for children, letters in sweetmeats, gingerbread, ivory, all manner of play-things to make him take his larning, but it would not do: hearing of my secret, they applied to me; I gave the child a dose, and, will you believe it, upon the word of an honest man—he could say his criss-cross-row in a fortnight.

Ail. Now, that's very amazing! I'll make use of it myself, and begin to read immediately; for I never remember a word after the book is shut; and that's vexatious, you know.

Dr Last. And would you believe, that this fine remedy was invented by my old mother?

Ail. Your mother!

Dr Last. Why, she knows as much of physic as I do; it is a gift in our family: and she has invented things to take spots out of cloaths, and iron moulds out of linen.

Ail. I long to be acquainted with her.

Dr Last. Well, will you swallow this now?

Ail. Ay, come give it to me.

Friend. You jest sure—Can't you be a moment without some nasty slop or another? put it off to a more convenient time, and give nature a little respite.

Ail. Well, then, this evening, Dr Last, or to-morrow morning.

Dr Last. Pray, sir, may I be so bold as to ax if your name aint Groggins?

Friend. No, sir; my name's Friendly.

Dr Last. Then, sir, I desire to know, sir, what business you have to hinder me in my occupation? I say the gentleman shall take it now, and I warrant it will do him good.

Friend. Prithee, man, what d'ye mean?

Dr Last. I means what I says. Mr Ailwould, will you take it? If you don't take it, I'll go away directly.

Friend. Well, do go away, sir; we desire it.

Dr Last. O, with all my heart!

[*Exit* DR LAST.

Ail. Brother, you'll be the cause of some mischief here.

Friend. What mischief? No, no, brother, I shall be the cause of no mischief, but a great deal of good; and I wish I could drive away all the physic-mongers that come after you, with their cursed drugs, in the same manner; you'd live the longer for it.

Ail. Some dreadful mischief will come of it, indeed——I must call him back——Dr Last, Dr Last!

Friend. Brother, for shame!

Ail. Don't talk to me; you want to send me to my grave———Dr Last, pray come back!

Re-enter DR LAST.

Dr Last. [*Fiercely to* FRIENDLY.] Did you call me, sir?

Friend. No, doctor, but Mr Ailwould did.

Dr Last. Mr Ailwou'd, I am not used politely here at all.

Ail. Indeed, sir, it was not——

Dr Last. I have given that there thing to ladies; nay, to children, that have been troubled with the worms, who never made a wry face, but licked their lips after it as pleasantly as if it had been so much treacle or sugar-candy.

Ail. It was not I——

Dr Last. And when I took the trouble of coming myself——

Ail. 'Twas he———

Dr Last. In my own chariot——

Ail. He was the cause——

Dr Last. Without demanding nothing extraordinary for my trouble—I have a good mind not to marry your daughter!

Ail. I tell you it was all my brother; it was, upon my word and credit—But give me the cordial; and, to make you amends, I'll take double the quantity.

Friend. Are you mad?

Dr Last. No, he's not—I insist upon his taking it for the honour of my medicine—And if you don't take a glass, too, you shall hear further from me.

Friend. Very well, doctor; I fear your sword less than your poison.

Dr Last. O, ay, poison, poison, we shall see whether its poison.

Ail. Give it to me, doctor.

Dr Last. Here, Mr Ailwou'd.

Ail. Pray now, brother, let me prevail upon you, in compliment to the doctor———

Friend. Nay, good brother, don't be absurd.

Dr Last. Now I'm satisfied; and I'll call upon you again in an hour.

Enter PRUDENCE.

Ail. Prudence!

Pru. Sir!

Ail. Get me my armed chair here—Its inconceivable what a warmth this medicine diffuses all over my body.

Friend. Well, but, brother, did not you hear Dr Last say just now, that he was in doubt whether he would marry your daughter or not? and after so slighting an expression, surely you will not persist in your design! but let me talk to you of this gentleman who wishes to have my niece.

Ail. No, brother, if Dr Last won't have her, I'll send her to France, and put her into a con-

vent; I am sure she has an amorous inclination for somebody: and to let you know, I have discovered secret interviews in my house, which some people don't think I've discovered.

Friend. I dare swear, brother, my niece has no attachment but to the gentleman I have mentioned to you; in which case, you have nothing to be angry with, all tending to the honourable purpose of marriage.

Ail. I don't care for what you say; I'll send her over to France; I am determined on it.

Friend. There's somebody you want to please, brother, by that, I doubt.

Ail. I know your meaning, sir; you're always harping upon the same strain. My wife is a strange hobgoblin in your eyes, brother.

Friend. Yes, brother, since 'tis necessary to be plain with you, 'tis your wife, that I mean; and I can no more bear your ridiculous fondness for her, than that you have for physic; nor endure to see you run hand over-head into all the snares she lays for you.

Pru. O, dear sir, don't speak so of my lady—she's a woman, that nobody can say any thing against; a woman without the least grain of artifice or design, and loves my master!—there's no saying how much she loves him.

Ail. Ay, only ask her how excessive fond she is of me.

Pru. Most excessive!

Ail. How much concern my illness gives her.

Pru. Yes.

Ail. And the care and pains she takes about me.

Pru. Right.—Shall we convince you now, Mr Friendly, and show you directly what a surprising affection my lady has for my master?—Permit me, sir, to undeceive him, and let him see his mistake. [*Aside.*

Ail. As how, Prudence?

Pru. Hark! my lady is just returned. Do you step into the next room there—stretch yourself out, and feign yourself dead: he may slip into the closet: I'll set the doors open, and you'll see what violent grief she'll be in, when I tell her the news.

Ail. Hey—hum!—I profess I have a mind to take her advice—but, no; I can never bear to hear the shrieks and lamentations she'll make over me; and yet, 'twill be a comfort to me to hear them too, to feel her virtuous tears bedew my face, and her sweet lips kissing my cheeks a thousand times, to bring me back again to life: and her—Ah, verily, I'll do it; verily, I'll do it: and then, sir, what will become of your fine surmises?—But, Prudence, art thou not afraid, that her very thinking me dead will break her heart?

Pru. To be sure, sir, if you should keep her in her fright too long.

Ail. O, let me alone for that; I'll make the experiment this very minute; this very minute. But is there no danger in feigning one's self dead?

Pru. No, no; what danger should there be? 'Tis only shutting your eyes, and stretching yourself out. [*To* AILWOULD.] Now, sir, we shall show you your error, and convince you how much you have injured the best of wives. [*To* FRIENDLY.] 'Twill be pleasant enough afterwards, to see how blank he will look—Here's my lady; quick, quick, both of you away!

[*Exeunt* AILWOULD *and* FRIENDLY.

Enter MRS AILWOULD.

Oh! Heavens! Oh! fatal misfortune! what a strange accident is this!

Mrs Ail. What's the matter, Prudence!

Pru. [*Crying.*] Ah! madam!

Mrs Ail. What is it? what do you mean by blubbering, prithee?

Pru. My master's dead, madam.

Mrs Ail. Dead!

Pru. [*Sobbing.*] Ye-ye-yes.

Mrs Ail. Are you sure of it?

Pru. Too sure, alas! No body yet knows any thing of this accident: There was not a soul but myself to help him; he sunk down in my arms, and went off like a child——See there, madam, he lies stretched out in the next room.

Mrs Ail. Now, Heaven be praised!—What a simpleton art thou to cry?

Pru. Cry, ma'am! why, I thought we were to cry?

Mrs Ail. And for what, pray! I know of no loss he is—Was he of any use upon earth? A man troublesome to all the world; odious in his person; disgusting in his manners; never without some filthy medicine in his mouth or his stomach; continually coughing, hawking, and spitting; a tiresome, peevish, disagreeable monster!

Pru. An excellent funeral sermon, truly! [*Aside.*

Mrs Ail. Prudence, you must assist me in the execution of my design; and you may depend upon it, I will amply reward your services. Since, by good fortune, no one is yet apprised of this accident, beside ourselves, let us keep his death a secret a few days, till I have been able to settle my affairs on a sure foundation: there are papers and money of which I would possess myself—Nor, indeed, is it just, that all I have suffered with him living should not be rewarded by some advantage at his death.

Pru. To be sure, madam.

Mrs Ail. In the mean time, I'll go and secure his keys, for I know he has a considerable sum of money in his scrutoire, which he received yesterday.

MRS AILWOULD *going to the door, meets* FRIENDLY *and* AILWOULD.

Mrs Ail. Ah! ah! ah! [*Screams.*

Ail. O! devil of a help-mate! have I found you out?

Friend. Your servant, madam.

Mrs Ail. Lord! my dear, I'm so disappointed—so pleased, I mean, and so frightened—This wicked girl told me you were dead.

Ail. Yes, and a fine oration you pronounced over me!

Mrs Ail. Nay, but, my dear, this is the most unreasonable thing—[*Turning to* FRIENDLY.]—some slight conversation, that I have had with my maid here, which Mr Ailwould takes in a wrong sense: but, I dare swear, when he has considered the matter a little, he will think differently.

Ail. Get out of my sight, get out of my sight!

Mrs Ail. Well, but, lovely, let me explain the matter to you.

Ail. I'll never hear a word from you again as long as I live.

Mrs Ail. Nay, sir, if you bear yourself so haughtily, you'll find me a match for you. It is not to-day, my dear, I am to learn, that your brain is full of maggots; however, you shall call me more than once before I come back to you, I assure you. [*Exit.*

Ail. Did you ever hear such an impudent creature? Od's my life, with what an air she carried it!—But do'st think she was in earnest, Prudence?

Pru. Troth do I, sir.

Friend. Come, brother, to tell you the plain truth, Prudence devised this method in order to open your eyes to your wife's perfidy—She has long deceived you with a show of false tenderness, but now you see her in her genuine colours.

Ail. I profess my eyes were dazzled, and all my senses confused; I know not what I either hear or see: but, in the first place, I renounce physic——

Enter NANCY *und* HARGRAVE.

Pru. Lord! sir, here's miss Nancy and Mr Hargrave.

Nan. Dear papa, what's the matter?

Ail. The matter, child! I don't know, child. [*Seeing* HARGRAVE.] What brings you here, sir?

Friend. This, brother, is the young gentleman I propose as a match for your daughter; and, after what I have said, and what has happened, I hope you will no longer refuse to listen to his pretensions.

Ail. Why, really, sir, my chief objection to you, is your total ignorance of the medicinal art; if you can think of any method to remove that—

Har. I must own, sir, I'm afraid I'm rather too far advanced in life to make any progress in so deep and abstracted a study.

Ail. Why, with regard to the more capital branches, I grant you; but in the subaltern offices, I'm of a contrary opinion: Suppose, now, you were to bind yourself apprentice for a year or two to some skilful apothecary? surely, in that time you might learn to decypher a prescription, and make up a medicine with a very few blunders.

Har. D'ye think so, sir?

Ail. You might, indeed, now and then, give a dose of arsenic for salts; but that's an accident might happen to the oldest practitioner.

Friend. Ah, brother, brother, what's this I hear! It was but this moment you were determined to renounce physic, and here you are talking as warmly and absurdly about it as ever!

Ail. Eh! It's very true, indeed, brother. However, let it suffice, I give the young man my daughter without any conditions at all: And now I'll go and get effectually rid of that other plague, my wife; for I shall not be easy, while we are under the same roof. [*Exit.*

Friend. If we can't cure him of his love for drugs, we have done nothing.

Nan. I doubt, sir, that will be impossible.

Friend. Hist, here comes Dr Last—I'll take the opportunity of your father's absence to have some sport with him; put on melancholy countenances, and take your cues from me.

Pru. I know what you'd be at, sir, and I'll second you.

Enter DR LAST.

Dr Last. Mr Ailwould, where are you? I have brought you some of my essence of cucumber, by way of a taste.

Friend. O, Dr Last, you're come! your servant, sir, I'm glad to see you.

Dr Last. Sir, I'm obliged to you—Where is Mr Ailwould?

Friend. Where is he, sir?——

Dr Last. Ay; because I wants to speak to him.

Friend. He's dead, sir.

Pru. [*Bursting ridiculously into tears.*] Oh! Oh! Oh!

Dr Last. What's the matter, Mrs Prudence? I warrant your master is only in a sound; and I've a bottle of stuff in my pocket that will fetch him in a whiff.

Friend. Hold, sir, no more of your stuff!

Dr Last. Well, then, let me go and feel his pulse.

Friend. Nor that neither; you shan't go near him: but we insist upon your telling us what you gave him out of your vial just now!

Dr Last. How! tell you my secret—A bookseller offered me a thousand pounds for it.

Har. A bookseller offered you a thousand pounds! That may be, sir, but Mr Ailwould died a few minutes after you administered it; we, therefore, take it for granted, that it has poison-

ed him; and, unless you prove very clearly to the contrary, we shall consider you as his murderer, and treat you accordingly.

Dr Last. O, don't think to humbug me so!

Enter AILWOULD, *behind.*

Ail. What are they doing here?

Nan. Dear sir, have patience—Stop where you are a little, and let them go on.

Friend. Within there; seize this fellow.

Dr Last. Liberty—I'm a free-born Briton, in my native city—If any one lays a finger upon me, I'll put him into the crown-office.

Friend. Ay, but we'll put you into Newgate first—Carry him before a justice! I'll go and be a witness.

Pru. Ay, and so will I.

Dr Last. [*In a great passion.*] Well, but stay; let me go a bit—What will you be a witness of?

Pru. That you poisoned my master.

Dr Last. It can't be.

Friend. We'll prove it.

Dr Last. It's a fictitious report; for, to let you see the difference now—what I gave him was nothing in the world but a little chalk and vinegar; and, if it could do him no good, it could do him no harm.

Ail. And so, sirrah, this is the way you take people in? Your famous cordial, then, is chalk and vinegar?

Dr Last. What! Mr Ailwould, aren't you dead?

Ail. No, sirrah; but no thanks to you for that—so, get you out of my house, or I'll chalk and vinegar you with a vengeance, you pretending, quacking, cheating——

Dr Last. Don't strike me!

Ail. I'll break every bone in your skin, if you don't get out of my house.

Friend. Nay, brother——

Dr Last. My own chariot's below.

Ail. A cart, a wheel-barrow for such scoundrels!

Dr Last. Don't call me out of my name.

Ail. I can't, sirrah!

Dr Last. You did, you did, and I'll make you pay for it.

Ail. Get out of my house!

Dr Last. That's all I want—He has pushed me—I call you every one to witness—I'll swear to the assault.

Friend. Take him away!

Dr Last. [*As they are taking him away.*] I'll swear to the assault—and if I don't get redemnification—— [*Hurried off.*

Enter POLLY.

Pol. Papa! papa!

Ail. What's the matter, my dear?

Pol. My mamma's gone abroad, and says, she'll never come home no more; so she won't.

Ail. A good riddance! a good riddance!

Pol. La, papa! if that isn't the man I saw just now kissing my sister!

Pru. Ah! you little tell-tale!

Pol. Indeed, Prudence, but I am no tell-tale, so I an't! for he kissed me too, and I never said a word of it.

Friend. Well, my dear, he's to be married to your sister now.

Pol. Is he?—And won't you get somebody to marry me, papa? You have been promising me a husband a great while, and I'm tired of old John the butler.

Ail. Ay, my dear, I dare swear you'll lose no time—But, come, brother, let us now go in—I have got rid of my wife—I have forsworn quacks and physic—and I hope I shall have the satisfaction to see our friends contented.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

LAME LOVER.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

SIR LUKE LIMP, *the Lame Lover.*
SERJEANT CIRCUIT, *a lawyer.*
COLONEL SECRET.
JACK, *son to* SERJEANT CIRCUIT.
MR WOODFORD, *attached to* CHARLOTTE.
MR FAIRPLAY, *his guardian.*
First Servant.
Second Servant.

WOMEN.

MRS CIRCUIT, *wife to* SERJEANT CIRCUIT.
CHARLOTTE, *her daughter.*
MRS SIMPER.
BETTY, *servant to* MRS CIRCUIT.

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter SERJEANT CIRCUIT *and* CHARLOTTE.

Char. I TELL you, sir, his love to me is all a pretence; it is amazing that you, who are so acute, so quick in discerning on other occasions, should be so blind upon this.

Ser. But where are your proofs, Charlotte? What signifies your opening matters which your evidence cannot support?

Char. Surely, sir, strong circumstances in every court should have weight.

Ser. So they have collaterally, child; that is, by way, as it were, of corroboration, or where matters are doubtful; then, indeed, as Plowden wisely observes, 'Les circonstances ajout beaucoup depoids aux faits.' You understand me?

Char. Not perfectly well.

Ser. Then to explain by case in point: A, we will suppose, my dear, robs B of a watch upon Hounslow-heath—d'ye mind, child?

Char. I do, sir.

Ser. A is taken up and is indicted; B swears positively to the identity of A. D'ye observe?

Char. Attentively.

Ser. Then what does me A, but sets up the alibi C to defeat the affidavit of B. You take me?

Char. Clearly.

Ser. So far you see, then, the balance is even.

Char. True.

Ser. But then, to turn the scale, child, against A, in favour of B, they produce the circumstance D, viz. B's watch, found in the pocket of A; upon which the testimony of C being contradicted

by B—no, by D—why then, A, that is to say, C—no, D—joining B, they convict C no, no, A—against the affidavit of C. So, this being pretty clear, child, I leave the application to you.

Char. Very obliging, sir. But suppose now, sir, it should appear, that the attention of sir Luke Limp is directed to some other object, would not that induce you to——

Ser. Other object! Where?

Char. In this very house.

Ser. Here! why the girl is non compos; there's nobody here, child, but a parcel of Abigails.

Char. No, sir!

Ser. No.

Char. Yes, sir, one person else.

Ser. Who is that?

Char. But remember, sir, my accusation is confined to Sir Luke.

Ser. Well, well.

Char. Suppose then, sir, those powerful charms which made a conquest of you, may have extended their empire over the heart of Sir Luke?

Ser. Why, hussy, you don't hint at your mother-in-law?

Char. Indeed, sir, but I do.

Ser. Ay! why this is point blank treason against my sovereign authority! but can you, Charlotte, bring proof of any overt acts?

Char. Overt acts!

Ser. Ay; that is, any declaration by writing, or even word of mouth, is sufficient; then let them demur if they dare.

Char. I can't say that, sir; but another organ has been pretty explicit.

Ser. Which?

Char. In those cases a very infallible one—the eye.

Ser. Pshaw! nonsense and stuff!—The eye! The eye has no authority in a court of law.

Char. Perhaps not, sir; but it is a decisive evidence in a court of love.

Ser. Hark you, hussy? why you would not file an information against the virtue of madam your mother? you would not insinuate that she has been guilty of crim. con.?

Char. Sir, you mistake me; it is not the lady, but the gentleman, I am about to impeach.

Ser. Have a care, Charlotte! I see on what ground your action is founded—jealousy.

Char. You were never more deceived in your life; for it is impossible, my dear sir, that jealousy can subsist without love.

Ser. Well?

Char. And from that passion, (thank Heaven) I am pretty free at present.

Ser. Indeed!

Char. A sweet object to excite tender desires!

Ser. And why not, hussy?

Char. First, as to his years.

Ser. What then?

Char. I own, sir, age procures honour, but I believe it is very rarely productive of love.

Ser. Mighty well!

Char. And though the loss of a leg can't be imputed to sir Luke Limp as a fault——

Ser. How!

Char. I hope, sir, at least you will allow it a misfortune?

Ser. Indeed!

Char. A pretty thing truly, for a girl, at my time of life, to be tied to a man with one foot in the grave.

Ser. One foot in the grave! the rest of his body is not a whit the nearer for that. There has been only an execution issued against part of his personals; his real estate is unincumbered and free—— besides, you see he does not mind it a whit, but is as alert, and as merry, as a defendant after non-suiting a plaintiff for omitting an S.

Char. O, sir! I know how proud sir Luke is of his leg, and have often heard him declare, that he would not change his bit of timber for the best flesh and bone in the kingdom.

Ser. There's a hero for you!

Char. To be sure, sustaining unavoidable evil with constancy, is a certain sign of greatness of mind.

Ser. Doubtless.

Char. But then to derive a vanity from a misfortune, will not, I'm afraid, be admitted as a vast instance of wisdom, and indeed looks as if the man had nothing better to distinguish himself by.

Ser. How does that follow?

Char. By inuendo.

Ser. Negatur.

Char. Besides, sir, I have other proofs of your hero's vanity, not inferior to that I have mentioned.

Ser. Cite them.

Char. The paltry ambition of levying and following titles.

Ser. Titles! I don't understand you.

Char. I mean the poverty of fastening in public upon men of distinction, for no other reason but because of their rank; adhering to sir John till the baronet is superseded by my lord; quitting the puny peer for an earl; and sacrificing all three to a duke.

Ser. Keeping good company! a laudable ambition!

Char. True, sir, if the virtues that procured the father a peerage could with that be entailed on the son.

Ser. Have a care, hussy!—there are severe laws against speaking evil of dignities——

Char. Sir!

Ser. Scandalum magnatum is a statute not to be trifled with: why, you are not one of those vulgar sluts that think a man the worse for being a lord?

Char. No, sir; I am contented with only not thinking him the better.

Ser. For all this, I believe, hussy, a right honourable proposal would soon make you alter your mind.

Char. Not unless the proposer had other qualities than what he possesses by patent. Besides, sir, you know sir Luke is a devotee to the bottle.

Ser. Not a whit the less honest for that.

Char. It occasions one evil at least; that when under its influence, he generally reveals all, sometimes more than he knows.

Ser. Proofs of an open temper, you baggage! but, come, come, all these are but trifling objections.

Char. You mean, sir, they prove the object a trifle?

Ser. Why, you pert jade, do you play on my words? I say sir Luke is——

Char. Nobody.

Ser. Nobody! how the deuce do you make that out? He is neither person attainted or outlawed; may, in any of his majesty's courts, sue or be sued, appear by attorney, or in propria persona: can acquire, buy, procure, purchase, possess, and inherit, not only personalities, such as goods and chattels, but even realities, as all lands, tenements, and hereditaments, whatsoever and wheresoever.

Char. But, sir——

Ser. Nay, further, child, he may sell, give, bestow, bequeath, devise, demise, lease, or to farm, let, ditto lands, to any person whoms ever—and——

Char. Without doubt, sir; but there are, notwithstanding, in this town, a great number of nobodies, not described by Lord Coke.

Ser. Hey?

Char. There is your next-door neighbour, sir Harry Hen, an absolute blank.

Ser. How so, Mrs Pert?

Char. What, sir! a man who is not suffered to hear, see, smell, or, in short, to enjoy the free use of any one of his senses; who, instead of having a positive will of his own, is denied even a paltry negative; who can neither resolve or reply, consent or deny, without first obtaining the leave of his lady: an absolute monarch to sink into the sneaking state of being a slave to one of his subjects—Oh fye!

Ser. Why, to be sure, sir Harry Hen is, as I may say——

Char. Nobody, sir, in the fullest sense of the word—Then your client, Lord Solo.

Ser. Heyday! Why, you would not annihilate a peer of the realm, with a prodigious estate, and an allowed judge, too, of the elegant arts?

Char. O yes, sir, I am no stranger to that nobleman's attributes; but then, sir, please to consider, his power as a peer he gives up to a proxy; the direction of his estate to a rapacious, artful attorney: and, as to his skill in the elegant arts, I presume you confine them to painting and music. He is directed, in the first, by Mynheer Van Eisel, a Dutch lauber; and, in the last, is but the echo of Signora Florenza, his lordship's mistress, and an opera singer.

Ser. Mercy upon us! at what a rate the jade runs!

Char. In short, sir, I define every individual, who, ceasing to act for himself, becomes the tool, the mere engine, of another man's will, to be nothing more than a cypher.

Ser. At this rate the jade will half unpeople the world: but what is all this to sir Luke? to him not one of your cases apply.

Char. Every one—sir Luke has not a first principle in his whole composition; not only his pleasures, but even his passions, are prompted by others; and he is as much directed to the objects of his love and his hatred, as in his eating, drinking, and sleeping. Nay, though he is active, and eternally busy, yet his own private affairs are neglected; and he would not scruple to break an appointment that was to determine a considerable part of his property, in order to exchange a couple of hounds for a lord, or to buy a pad-nag for a lady. In a word—but he's at hand, and will explain himself best; I hear his stump on the stairs.

Ser. I hope you will preserve a little decency before your lover at least?

Char. Lover! ha, ha, ha!

Enter SIR LUKE LIMP.

Sir Luke. Mr Serjeant, your slave!—Ah! are you there, my little—O Lord! Miss, let me tell you something for fear of forgetting—Do you know that you are new-christened, and have had me for a gossip?

Char. Christened! I don't understand you.

Sir Luke. Then lend me your ear—Why, last night, as colonel Kill 'em, sir William Weezy, lord Frederick Foretop and I, were carelessly sliding the Ranelagh round, picking our teeth, after a damned muzzy dinner at Boodle's, who should trip by but an abbess, well known about town, with a smart little nun in her suit. Says Weezy (who, between ourselves, is as husky as hell) Who is that? odds flesh, she's a delicate wench! Zounds! cried lord Frederick, where can Weezy have been, not to have seen the Harrietta before? for you must know Frederick is a bit of a Macaroni, and adores the soft Italian termination in *a*.

Char. He does?

Sir Luke. Yes, a dilletanti all over. Before? replied Weezy; crush me if ever I saw any thing half so handsome before!—No! replied I in an instant; colonel, what will Weezy say when he sees the Charlotta?—Hey! you little——

Char. Meaning me, I presume?

Sir Luke. Without doubt; and you have been toasted by that name ever since.

Ser. What a vast fund of spirits he has!

Sir Luke. And why not, my old splitter of causes?

Ser. I was just telling Charlotte, that you was not a whit the worse for the loss.

Sir Luke. The worse! much the better, my dear. Consider, I can have neither strain, splint, spavin, or gout; have no fear of corns, kibes, or that another man should kick my shins, or tread on my toes.

Ser. Right.

Sir Luke. What, d'ye think I would change with Bill Spindle for one of his drumsticks, or chop with Lord Lumber for both of his logs?

Ser. No!

Sir Luke. No, damn it, I am much better—Look there—Ha!—What is there I am not able to do! To be sure I am a little aukward at running; but then, to make me amends, I'll hop with any man in town for his sum.

Ser. Ay, and I'll go his halves.

Sir Luke. Then as to your dancing, I am cut out at Madam Cornelly's, I grant, because of the crowd; but as far as a private set of six couple, or moving a chair-minuet, match me who can!

Char. A chair-minuet! I don't understand you.

Sir Luke. Why, child, all grace is confined to the motion of the head, arms, and chest, which may, sitting, be as fully displayed as if one had as many legs as a polypus—As thus—tol de rol—don't you see?

Ser. Very plain.

Sir Luke. A leg! a redundancy! a mere nothing at all. Man is from nature an extravagant creature. In my opinion, we might all be full as well as we are with but half the things that we have.

Char. Ay, sir Luke? how do you prove that?

Sir Luke. By constant experience.—You must have seen the man who makes and uses pens without hands?

Ser. I have.

Sir Luke. And not a twelvemonth agone, I lost my way in a fog, at Mile-end, and was conducted to my house in May-fair by a man as blind as a beetle.

Ser. Wonderful!

Sir Luke. And as to hearing and speaking, those organs are of no manner of use in the world.

Ser. How!

Sir Luke. If you doubt it, I will introduce you to a whole family, dumb as oysters, and deaf as the dead, who chatter from morning till night by only the help of their fingers.

Ser. Why, Charlotte, these are cases in point.

Sir Luke. Oh! clear as a trout-stream; and it is not only, my little Charlotte, that this piece of timber answers every purpose, but it has procured me many a bit of fun in my time.

Ser. Ay!

Sir Luke. Why, it was but last summer at Tunbridge, we were plagued the whole season with a bullet-headed Swiss from the canton of Berne, who was always boasting what and how much he dared do; and then, as to pain, no Stoic, not Diogenes, held it more in contempt. By gods, he vas ne more minds it dan nothings at all—So, foregad, I gave my German a challenge.

Ser. As how!—Mind, Charlotte.

Sir Luke. Why, to drive a corkin-pin into the calves of our legs.

Ser. Well, well?

Sir Luke. Mine, you may imagine, was easily done—but when it came to the baron—

Ser. Ay, ay?

Sir Luke. Our modern Cato soon lost his coolness and courage, screwed his nose up to his foretop, rapped out a dozen oaths in High Dutch, limped away to his lodgings, and was there laid up for a month—Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a Servant, and delivers a card to SIR LUKE.

Sir Luke. [*Reads.*]—'Sir Gregory Goose desires the honour of sir Luke Limp's company 'to dine. An answer is desired.' Gadso! a little unlucky; I have been engaged for these three weeks.

Ser. What, I find sir Gregory is returned for the corporation of Fleesum.

Sir Luke. Is he so? Oh ho!—That alters the case.—George, give my compliments to sir Gregory, and I'll certainly come and dine there. Order Joe to run to alderman Inkle's in Threadneedle-street; sorry can't wait upon him, but confined to bed two days with new influenza.

Char. You make light, sir Luke, of these sort of engagements?

Sir Luke. What can a man do? These damned fellows (when one has the misfortune to meet them) take scandalous advantages—teaze—when will you do me the honour, pray, sir Luke, to take a bit of mutton with me? do you name the day—They are as bad as a beggar, who attacks your coach at the mounting of a hill; there is no getting rid of them, without a penny to one and a promise to t'other.

Ser. True; and then for such a time, too—three weeks! I wonder they expect folks to remember. It is like a retainer in Michaelmas term for the summer assizes.

Sir Luke. Not but upon these occasions, no man in England is more punctual than—

Enter a Servant, who gives SIR LUKE *a letter.*

From whom?

Serv. Earl of Brenford. The servant waits for an answer.

Sir Luke. Answer!—By your leave, Mr Serjeant and Charlotte [*Reads.*] 'Taste for music

—Mons. Duport—fail—Dinner upon table at 'five'—Gadso! I hope sir Gregory's servant an't gone?

Serv. Immediately upon receiving the answer.

Sir Luke. Run after him as fast as you can—tell him, quite in despair—recollect an engagement that can't in nature be missed—and return in an instant.

Char. You see, sir, the knight must give way for my lord.

Sir Luke. No, faith, it is not that, my dear Charlotte; you saw that was quite an extempore business.—No, hang it, no, it is not for the title; but, to tell you the truth, Brentford has more wit than any man in the world; it is that makes me fond of his house.

Char. By the choice of his company he gives an unanswerable instance of that.

Sir Luke. You are right, my dear girl. But now to give you a proof of his wit. You know Brentford's finances are a little out of repair, which procures him some visits that he would very gladly excuse.

Ser. What need he fear? His person is sacred; for, by the tenth of William and Mary—

Sir Luke. He knows that well enough; but for all that—

Ser. Indeed, by a late act of his own house, (which does them infinite honour) his goods or chattels may be—

Sir Luke. Seized upon, when they can find them; but he lives in ready-furnished lodgings, and hires his coach by the month.

Ser. Nay, if the sheriff return 'non inventus'——

Sir Luke. A pox o'your law, you make me lose sight of my story! One morning, a Welch coachmaker came with his bill to my lord, whose name was unluckily Loyd. My lord had the man up. You are called, I think, Mr Loyd?—At your lordship's service, my lord.—What! Loyd with an L?—It was with an L indeed, my lord.—Because in your part of the world, I have heard that Loyd and Floyd were synonymous, the very same names.—Very often, indeed, my lord.—But you always spell yours with an L?—Always.—That, Mr Loyd, is a little unlucky; for you must know I am now paying my debts alphabetically, and in four or five years you might have come in with an F; but I am afraid I can give you no hopes for your L.—Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. There was no overtaking the servant.

Sir Luke. That is unlucky! Tell my lord I'll attend him. I'll call on sir Gregory myself.

Ser. Why, you won't leave us, sir Luke?

Sir Luke. Pardon, dear Serjeant and Charlotte! have a thousand things to do for half a million of people, positively: promised to procure a husband for lady Cicely Sulky, and match a coach-horse for brigadier Whip; after that must run into the city to borrow a thousand for young At-all at Almack's; send a Cheshire cheese, by the stage, to sir Timothy Tankard in Suffolk; and get, at the Herald's office, a coat of arms to clap on the coach of Billy Bengal, a nabob newly arrived: so you see I have not a moment to lose.

Ser. True, true.

Sir Luke. At your toilet to-morrow, at ten, you may——

Enter a servant abruptly, and runs against SIR LUKE.

Can't you see where you are running, you rascal!

Serv. Sir, his grace, the duke of——

Sir Luke. Grace! where is he?—Where—

Serv. In his coach at the door. If you an't better engaged, would be glad of your company to go into the city, and take a dinner at Dolly's.

Sir Luke. In his own coach, did you say?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Sir Luke. With the coronets—or—

Serv. I believe so.

Sir Luke. There's no resisting of that.—Bid Joe run to sir Gregory Goose's.

Serv. He is already gone to alderman Inkle's.

Sir Luke. Then do you step to the knight—hey!—no—you must go to my lord's—hold, hold, no—I have it—Step first to sir Greg's, then pop in at lord Brentford's just as the company are going to dinner—

Serv. What shall I say to sir Gregory?

Sir Luke. Any thing—what I told you before.

Serv. And what to my lord?

Sir Luke. What!—Why, tell him, that my uncle from Epsom—no—that won't do, for he knows I don't care a farthing for him—hey!—Why, tell him—hold, I have it. Tell him, that, as I was going into my chair to obey his commands, I was arrested by a couple of bailiffs, forced into a hackney-coach, and carried to the Pyed Bull in the borough; I beg ten thousand pardons for making his grace wait, but his grace knows my misfor—— [*Exit.*

Char. Well, sir, what d'ye think of the proofs? I flatter myself I have pretty well established my case.

Ser. Why, hussy, you have hit upon points; but then they are but trifling flaws, they don't vitiate the title, that stands unimpeached; and—But, madam, your mother.

Enter MRS CIRCUIT.

Mrs Cir. What have you done with the knight?—Why, you have not let him depart?

Char. It was not in my power to keep him.

Mrs Cir. I don't wonder at that; but what took him away?

Char. What will at any time take him away—a duke at the door.

Mrs Cir. Are you certain of that?

Serj. Why, truly, chuck, his retreat was rather precipitate for a man, that is just going to be married.

Mrs Cir. The prospect of marriage does not always prove the strongest attachment.

Serj. Pardon me, lovee: the law allows no higher consideration than marriage.

Mrs Cir. Pshaw!

Serj. Insomuch, that if duke A was to intermarry with chambermaid B, difference of condition would prove no bar to the settlement.

Mrs Cir. Indeed!

Serj. Ay; and this was held to be law by chief baron Bind'em, in the famous case of the marquis of Cully and Fanny Flip-flap, the French dancer.

Mrs Cir. The greater blockhead the baron:—but don't pester me with your odious law-cases. Did not you tell me you was to go to Kingston to-day to try the crown causes?

Serj. I was begged to attend for fear his lordship should not be able to sit; but, if it proves inconvenient to you——

Mrs Cir. To me! Oh, by no means in the world; I am too good a subject to desire the least delay in the law's execution. And when d'ye set out?

Serj. Between one and two. I shall only just give a law lecture to Jack.

Mrs Cir. Lord! I wonder, Mr Circuit, you would breed that boy up to the bar.

Serj. Why not, chuck? He has fine steady parts, and for his time moots a point——

Mrs Cir. Steady! stupid, you mean: nothing, sure, could add to his heaviness but the being loaded with law. Why don't you put him into the army?

Serj. Nay, chuck, if you choose it, I believe I have interest to get Jack a commission.

Mrs Cir. Why, Mr Circuit, you know he is no son of mine: perhaps, a cockade may animate the lad with some fire.

Serj. True, lovee; and a knowledge of the law mayn't be amiss to restrain his fire a little.

Mrs Cir. I believe there is very little danger of his exceeding in that way.

Serj. Charlotte, send hither your brother.

[*Exit* CHAR.

Mrs Cir. I'll not interrupt you.

Serj. Far from it, lovee; I should be glad to have you a witness of Jacky's improvement.

Mrs Cir. Of that I am no judge; besides, I am full of business to-day—There is to be a ballot at one for the *Ladies Club* lately established, and lady Bab Basto has proposed me for a member. Pray, my dear, when will you let me have that money to pay my lord Loo?

Serj. The three hundred you mean?

Mrs Cir. And besides, there is my debt to Kitty Cribbage. I protest I almost blush whenever I meet them.

Serj. Why really, lovee, 'tis a large sum of money. Now, were I worthy to throw in a little advice, we might make a pretty good hand of this business.

Mrs Cir. I don't understand you.

Serj. Bring an action against them on the statute in the name of my clerk; and so not only rescue the debt from their hands, but recover likewise considerable damages.

Mrs Cir. A pretty conceit, Mr Serjeant! but does it not occur to your wisdom, that as I have (by the help of captain Dog) been oftener a winner than loser, the tables may be turned upon us?

Serj. No, no, chuck, that did not escape me—I have provided for that. Do you know, by the law, both parties are equally culpable; so that, lovee, we shall be able to fleece your friends not only of what they have won of poor dearee, but likewise for what they have lost.

Mrs Cir. Why, what a paltry, pettifogging puppy art thou! And could you suppose that I would submit to the scandalous office?

Serj. Scandalous! I don't understand this strange perversion of words. The scandal lies in breaking the laws, not in bringing the offenders to justice.

Mrs Cir. Mean-spirited wretch! What, do you suppose that those laws could be levelled against people of their high rank and condition? Can it be thought that any set of men would submit to legal restraints on themselves? Absurd and preposterous!

Serj. Why, by their public practice, my love, one would suspect that they thought themselves excepted by a particular clause.

Mrs Cir. Oh, to be sure! not the least doubt can be made.

Serj. True, chuck——But, then, your great friends should never complain of highwaymen stopping their coaches, or thieves breaking into their houses.

Mrs Cir. Why, what has that to do with the business?

Serj. Oh, the natural consequence, lovee; for, whilst the superiors are throwing away their fortunes, and consequently their independence, above—you can't think but their domestics are following their examples below.

Mrs Cir. Well, and what then?

Serj. Then! the same distress that throws the master and mistress into the power of any who are willing to purchase them, by a regular gradation seduces the servants to actions, though more *critical*, perhaps not more atrocious.

Mrs Cir. Pshaw! stuff! I have no need to examine your dirty distinctions—Don't tease me with your jargon—I have told you the sums I shall want, so take care they are ready at your

returning from Kingston. Nay, don't hesitate; recollect your own state of the case, and remember my honour is in pawn, and must some way or other be redeemed by the end of the week. [*Exit.*

Serj. [*Solus.*] My honour is in pawn! Good Lord! how a century will alter the meaning of words! Formerly, *chastity* was the honour of women, and *good faith* and *integrity* the honour of men: but *now*, a lady who ruins her family by punctually paying her losses at play, and a gentleman who kills his best friend in some trifling frivolous quarrel, are your only tip-toe people of *honour*. Well, let them go on, it brings grist to our mill; for whilst both the sexes stick firm to their *honour*, we shall never want business either at Doctor's Commons or the Old Bailey.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter SERJEANT CIRCUIT, *and* JACK.

Serj. JACK, let Will bring the chaise to the door.

Jack. Mr Fairplay, sir, the attorney, begs to speak a few words.

Serj. How often have I told you, that I will see none of these sort of folks but at chambers? you know how angry your mother is at their raping, and littering the house.

Jack. He says, sir, he will not detain you five minutes.

Serj. Well, bid him walk in.

Enter FAIRPLAY.

Well, Mr Fairplay, what's your will?

Fair. I just called, Mr Serjeant, to know your opinion upon the case of young Woodford, and if you like the proposal of being concerned.

Serj. If it turns out as you state it, and that the father of the lad was really a minor, the Essex estate may, without doubt, be recovered, and so may the lands in the North.

Fair. We have full proofs to that fact.

Serj. May be so; but really, Mr Fairplay, you know the length of time that these kind of suits——

Fair. True, sir, but then your experience will shorten, I appreh——

Serj. That's more than I know; and, then, not only my fees lying dormant, but, perhaps, an expectation of money advanced.

Fair. The property, sir, is of very great value, and, upon the recovery, any acknowledgement shall be readily made.

Serj. There again, any! do you know, that in law, the word *any* has no meaning at all?—besides, when people are in distress, they are lavish enough of their offers; but when their business is done, then we have nothing but grumbling and grudging.

Fair. You have only to dictate your terms.

Serj. Does the lad live in town?

Fair. He has been under my care since the death of his father. I have given him as good education as my narrow fortune would let me. He is now studying the law in the Temple, in hopes, that, should he fail of other assistance, he may be able one day to do himself justice.

Serj. In the Temple?

Fair. Yes, sir, in those little chambers just over your head——I fancy the young gentleman knows him.

Jack. Who? Mr Woodford?, Lord, as well as myself! He is a sweet, sober youth, and will one day make a vast figure, I am sure.

Serj. Indeed!

Jack. I am positive, sir, if you were to hear him speak at the Robinhood in the Butcher-row, you would say so yourself. Why, he is now reckoned the third. Except the breeches-maker from Barbican, and Sawney Sinclair, the snuffman, there is not a mortal can touch him.

Serj. Peace, puppy! Well, Mr Fairplay, leave the papers a little longer with me, and——pray, who is employed against you?

Fair. A city attorney, one Sheepskin.

Serj. A cunning fellow; I know him. Well, sir, if you will call at Pump-court in a week—

Fair. I shall attend you.

Serj. Jack, open the door for Mr——[*Exeunt* FAIRPLAY *and* JACK.] Something may be made of this matter. I'll see this Sheepskin myself.—So much in future for carrying on the suit, or so much in hand to make it miscarry. A wise man should well weigh which party to take for.

Enter JACK.

So, Jack, any body at chambers to-day?

Jack. Fieri Facias from Fetter-lane, about the bill to be filed by Kit Crape against Will Vizard this term.

Serj. Praying for an equal partition of plunder?

Jack. Yes, sir.

Serj. Strange world we live in, that even highwaymen can't be true to each other! [*Half aside to himself.*] But we shall make master Vizard refund; we'll show him what long hands the law has.

Jack. Facias says, that, in all the books, he can't hit a precedent.

Serj. Then I'll make one myself; *aut inveniam aut faciam*, has been always my motto. The charge must be made for partnership profit, by bartering lead and gun-powder against money, watches, and rings, on Epping-forest, Hounslow-heath, and other parts of the kingdom.

Jack. He says, if the court should get scent of the scheme, the parties would all stand committed.

Serj. Cowardly rascal! but, however, the caution mayn't prove amiss. [*Aside.*] I'll not put my own name to the bill.

Jack. The declaration, too, is delivered in the cause of Roger Rapp'em against sir Solomon Simple.

Serj. What, the affair of the note?

Jack. Yes.

Serj. Why, he is clear that his client never gave such a note.

Jack. Defendant never saw plaintiff since the hour he was born; but, notwithstanding, they have three witnesses to prove a consideration and signing the note.

Serj. They have?

Jack. He is puzzled what plea to put in.

Serj. Three witnesses ready, you say?

Jack. Yes.

Serj. Tell him, Simple must acknowledge the note. [JACK *starts.*] and bid him, against the trial comes on, to procure four persons at least to prove the payment at the Crown and Anchor, the 10th of December.

Jack. But, then, how comes the note to remain in plaintiff's possession?

Serj. Well put, Jack! but we have a salvo for that; plaintiff happened not to have the note in his pocket, but promised to deliver it up when called thereunto by defendant.

Jack. That will do rarely.

Serj. Let the defence be a secret; for I see we have able people to deal with. But come, child, not to lose time, have you carefully conned those instructions I gave you?

Jack. Yes, sir.

Serj. Well, that we shall see. How many points are the great object of pratice?

Jack. Two.

Serj. Which are they?

Jack. The first is to put a man into possession of what is his right.

Serj. The second?

Jack. Either to deprive a man of what is really his right, or to keep him as long as possible out of possession.

Serj. Good boy! To gain the last end, what are the best means to be used?

Jack. Various and many are the legal modes of delay.

Serj. Name them!

Jack. Injunctions, demurrers, sham-pleas, writs of error, rejoinders, sur-rejoinders, rebutters, sur-rebutters, replications, exceptions, essoigns, and imparlance.

Serj. [*To himself.*] Fine instruments in the hands of a man who knows how to use them!—But now, Jack, we come to the point: If an able advocate has his choice in a cause (which if he is in reputation he may readily have), which side should he choose, the right or the wrong?

Jack. A great lawyer's business is always to make choice of the wrong.

Serj. And prithee, why so?

Jack. Because a good cause can speak for itself, whilst a bad one demands an able counsellor to give it a colour.

Serj. Very well. But in what respects will this answer to the lawyer himself?

Jack. In a twofold way. First, his fees will be large, in proportion to the dirty work he is to do.

Serj. Secondly?

Jack. His reputation will rise, by obtaining the victory in a desperate cause.

Serj. Right, boy! Are you ready in the case of the cow?

Jack. Pretty well, I believe.

Serj. Give it, then.

Jack. First of April, anno seventeen hundred and blank, John a Noakes was indicted by blank, before blank, in the county of blank, for stealing a cow, contra pacem, etcet, and against the statute in that case provided and made, to prevent stealing of cattle.

Serj. Go on.

Jack. Said Noakes was convicted upon the said statute.

Serj. What followed upon?

Jack. Motion in arrest of judgment made by counsellor Puzzle. First, because the field from whence the cow was conveyed is laid in the indictment as round, but turned out, upon proof, to be square.

Serj. That's well: a valid objection.

Jack. Secondly, because, in said indictment, the colour of the cow is called red, there being no such things, in rerum natura, as red cows, no more than black lions, spread eagles, flying griffins, or blue boars.

Serj. Well put.

Jack. Thirdly, Said Noakes has not offended against form of the statute; because stealing of cattle is there provided against: whereas we are only convicted of stealing a cow. Now, though cattle may be cows, yet it does by no means follow that cows must be cattle.

Serj. Bravo, bravo! buss me, you rogue; you are your father's own son! go on and prosper. I am sorry, dear Jack, I must leave thee. If Providence but sends thee life and health, I prophecy thou wilt wrest as much land from the owners, and save as many thieves from the gallows, as any practitioner since the days of king Alfred.

Jack. I'll do my endeavour. [*Exit* SERJEANT.] So! father is set off. Now, if I can but lay eyes on our Charlotte, just to deliver this letter, before madam comes home. There she is! Hist, sister Charlotte!

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. What have you got there, Jack?

Jack. Something for you, sister.

Char. For me! Prithee what is it?

Jack. A thing.

Char. What thing?

Jack. A thing that will please you, I'm sure.

Char. Come, don't be a boy, let me have it. [JACK *gives the letter.*] How's this! a letter! from whom?

Jack. Can't you guess?

Char. Not I; I don't know the hand.

Jack. May be not; but you know the inditer.

Char. Then tell me his name.

Jack. Break open the seal, and you'll find it.

Char. [*Opening the letter.*] 'Charles Woodford?'—I am sure I know nothing of him.

Jack. Ay, but, sister, you do.

Char. How! when, and where?

Jack. Don't you remember about three weeks ago, when you drank tea at our chambers, there was a young gentleman in a blue sattin waistcoat, who wore his own head of hair?

Char. Well?

Jack. That letter's from he.

Char. What can be his business with me?

Jack. Read that, and you'll know.

Char. [*Reads.*] 'Want words to apologize—'hum, hum—very first moment I saw you—hum, 'hum——smothered long in my breast—hum, 'hum—happiest, or else the most wretched, of 'men.'—So, sir, you have undertaken a pretty commission! and what do you think my father will ——

Jack. Why, I hope you won't go for to tell him?

Char. Indeed, sir, but I shall.

Jack. No, sister, I'm sure you won't be so cross. Besides, what could I do? The poor young lad begged so hard; and there, for this fortnight, he has gone about sighing, and musing, and moping: I am satisfied it would melt you to see him. Do, sister, let me bring him this evening, now father is out.

Char. Upon my word!—The young man has made no bad choice of an agent: you are for pushing matters at once.—But, harkee, sir, who is the spark you are so anxious about? and how long have you known him?

Jack. Oh! a prodigious long while; above a month, I am certain. Don't you think him mighty genteel? I assure you he is vastly liked by the ladies.

Char. He is!

Jack. Yes, indeed. Mrs Congo, at the Grecian coffee-house, says he's the soberest youth that comes to the house; and all Mrs Mittens's 'prentices throw down their work, and run to the window every time he goes by.

Char. Upon my word!

Jack. And moreover, besides that, he has several great estates in the country; but only, for the present, he is kept out of them all by the owners.

Char. Ah! Jack, that's the worst part of the story.

Jack. Pshaw! that's nothing at all. His guardian, Mr Fairplay, has been with father today, and says he is certain that he can set all to rights in a trice.

Char. Well, Jack, when that point is determined, it will be time enough to——

Jack. Then, Lord of mercy! why, sister Charlotte, it is my private opinion, that if you don't give him some crumbs of comfort, he won't live till Midsummer term.

Char. I warrant you. Either Cupid's darts were always but poetical engines, or they have been lately deprived of their points. Love holds no place in the modern bills of mortality. However, Jack, you may tell your friend that I have observed his frequent walks in our street.

Jack. Walks! Why, one should think he was appointed to relieve the old watchman; for no sooner one is off, but the other comes on.

Char. And that from his eyes being constantly fixed on my window (for the information of which I presume he is indebted to you)—

Jack. He, he, he!

Char. I had a pretty shrewd guess at his business; but tell him, that unless my fa—Hush! our tyrant is returned. Don't leave the house till I see you.

Enter MRS CIRCUIT *and* BETTY.

Mrs Cir. So, sir, what makes you loitering from chambers?—I thought I told you, you should never be here but at meals? [*Exit* JACK.] One spy is enough in a family.—Miss, you may go to your room; and, d'ye hear?—I shall have company, so you need not come down. [*Exit* CHARLOTTE.]—Betty, no message or letter?

Bet. None, madam.

Mrs Cir. That is amazing!—You know I expect colonel Secret and Mrs Simper every instant.

Bet. Yes, madam.

Mrs Cir. Put the fruit and the wine on the table in the next room.

Bet. Very well, madam.

Mrs Cir. And, Betty, order the fellow to let nobody in but sir Luke.

Bet. Madam, I shall take care. [*Exit.*

Mrs Cir. [*Sits down.*] The ballot must be over by this time. Sure there is nothing so

dreadful as a state of suspence: but should they black-ball me!—No, there's no danger of that: Miss Mattadore has insured me success.—Well, this is certainly one of the most useful institutions; it positively supplies the only point of time one does not know how to employ. From twelve, the hour of one's rising, to dinner, is a most horrible chasm; for though teasing the mercers and milliners, by tumbling their wares, is now and then an entertaining amusement, yet, upon repetition, it palls.—But every morning to be sure of a party, and then again at night, after a rout, to have a place to retire to; to be quite freed from all pain of providing; not to be pestered at table with the odious company of clients and country cousins; for I am determined to dine and sup at that club every day. I can tell them they'll have but very few forfeits from me.

Enter BETTY, *in haste, with a letter.*

Bet. By a chairman, madam, from the Thatched House.

Mrs Cir. Give it me, Betty, this instant!—Ay—this is Mattadore's hand. [*Opens, and reads the letter.*] 'My dear Circuit—it is with the ut-'most concern and confusion I find myself obli-'ged to acquaint you, that, notwithstanding all 'the pains I have taken, the club have thought fit 'to reject'—Oh! [*She faints.*

Bet. Bless my soul! my lady is gone!—John! Will! Kitty! run hither this instant!

Enter two Maids, and a man servant.

All. What, what's the matter?

Bet. Quick! quick! some hartshorn and water. [*Pats her hand.*] Madam! madam——

Serv. Here, here, here! [*Bringing water.*

Bet. John, go for the potter-carrier this instant—I believes to my soul she is dead—Kitty, fetch some feathers to burn under her nose.—There, stand further off, and give her some air—

Enter SIR LUKE.

Sir Luke. Hey day! what the deuce is the matter? What's the meaning of all this, Mrs Betty?

Bet. Oh, sir, is it you?—my poor lady! [*Cries.*] Clap the bottle hard to her nose.

Sir Luke. But how came it about?

Bet. Some of the continents of that cursed letter she has there in her hand.

Sir Luke. Here, here, take some of my eau de luce. [*Offering a bottle.*

Bet. There! she recovers a little—some water—I believe it is nothing but a satirical fit; I have had them myself—Now she opens her eyes—so, so—bend her forward a little.

Sir Luke. My sweet Mrs Circuit!

Mrs Cir. Who is that!

Bet. Nobody at all, madam, but only sir Luke.

Mrs Cir. Oh, sir Luke, such a stroke, so fatal, so sudden! it is not in nature I should ever survive it.

Sir Luke. Marry, Heaven forbid! But what cause—what could——

Mrs Cir. Leave the room. [*To the servants, who go out.*] Only look over that letter.

Sir Luke. Hum, hum—[*Reads.*] 'fit to reject 'you'—this——

Mrs Cir. There, there, there!

Sir Luke. I own this is the utmost malice of fortune—but let me finish the letter.—'This ca-'lamity, dear Circuit, is of such a nature as 'baffles all advice or interposition of friends: I 'shall therefore leave you to time and your own 'good understanding.'—Pretty and sensible.—'Yours, &c.'——But let us see, what says the postscript? [*Reads.*] 'Perhaps it may give you 'some comfort to know, that you had sixteen al-'monds, and but two raisins against you.'

Mrs Cir. But two!

Sir Luke. No more.

Mrs Cir. This must be Kitty Cribbage's doing; she has been tattling about the paltry trifle I owe her.

Sir Luke. Not unlikely: but come, bear up, my dear madam, and consider, that two——

Mrs Cir. Is as bad as two thousand.

Sir Luke. Granted; but perhaps it may not be too late to repair. Gadso! I have thought of a scheme—I'll be elected myself, and then I warrant we manage——

Mrs Cir. You, sir Luke? that never can be.

Sir Luke. No, madam; and why not?—Why, you don't suppose that they would venture to—

Mrs Cir. It would not only be against the spirit, but the very letter of their constitution, to choose you a member.

Sir Luke. Ay, madam, how so!

Mrs Cir. Their statutes are selected from all the codes that ever existed from the days of Lycurgus to the present Czarina.

Sir Luke. Well.

Mrs Cir. The law that relates to your case they have borrowed from the Roman religion.

Sir Luke. As how?

Mrs Cir. As no man can be admitted a monk, who has the least corporeal spot or defect; so, no candidate can be received as a member, who is deprived of the use of any one of his limbs.

Sir Luke. Nay, then, indeed, I am clearly cut out; that incapacity can never be got over.

Mrs Cir. Indeed, the serjeant says, if the club could be induced to resolve in your favour, then the original law would signify nothing.

Sir Luke. Well, well, we'll see what can be done. [*A loud knocking.*] But, hush! the company's come; collect yourself, sweet Mrs Circuit; don't give your enemies the malicious plea-

sure of seeing how this disappointment affects you.

Mrs Cir. Never fear; I know a little too much of the world not to turn this defeat to my credit.

Enter COLONEL SECRET *and* MRS SIMPER.

Mrs Sim. Your servant, sir Luke. My dear Circuit, I am frightened to death—your people tell me you are but just recovered from a——

Mrs Cir. Oh! nothing at all! a faintness, a kind of swimming—but those people are ever swelling mole-hills to mountains.

Mrs Sim. I protest I was afraid that you had suffered your late disappointment to lay hold of your spirits?

Mrs Cir. What disappointment, my dear?

Col. Mrs Simper hints at the little mistake made this morning at the Thatched House.

Mrs Cir. That! ridiculous! I could have told you that a fortnight ago, child——all my own doing.

Mrs Sim. How!

Sir Luke. Entirely.

Mrs Cir. Oh! I always detested the thoughts of the thing—They would put me up; let me say what I would, so I was reduced to the necessity of prevailing upon two of my friends to black-ball me.

Mrs Sim. That, indeed, alters the case.

Col. I am vastly happy to hear it; your old acquaintances were afraid they should lose you.

Mrs Cir. It is a sign they know but little of me—But come, my good folks, I have prepared a small collation in the next room; will you—

[*Exeunt.*

Enter JACK *and* WOODFORD.

Jack. I'll watch, sister, to see that nobody comes. Now, Woodford, make good use of your time. [*Exit* WOODFORD.] There, I have left them together; if I had staid, I don't believe they would have opened their mouths for a month: I never saw such an alteration in a lad since the day I was born. Why, if I had not known him before, I should not have thought he had a word to throw to a dog; but I remember the old proverb,

True lovers are shy,
When people are by.

I'll take a peep to see how they go on:—There they are, just in the same posture I left them; she folding her fingers, and he twirling his hat. Why, they don't even look at each other. Was there ever such a couple of——Stay, stay, now he opens his mouth—pshaw! Lord! there he shuts it again—hush! I hear somebody coming—no—nothing at all:—Mother is safe I am sure, there is no danger from her——Now let us take t'other——[*Peeps at the door.*] Hum!—gadso, matters are mightily mended——There, there! very well—there he lays down the law—Now he claps his hand on his heart—vastly pretty, I vow—There he swops with both his knees on the ground—Charming!—And squeezes his hat with both hands like one of the actors—Delightful! She wants him to rise, and he won't—Prodigious moving, indeed!

Enter BETTY.

Bet. So, sir, what are you doing there?

Jack. There! where?

Bet. With your eyes glewed close to the key-hole.

Jack. I wanted to speak a word to my sister.

Bet. Then why don't you open her door?

Jack. I did not know but she might be saying her prayers.

Bet. Prayers! a likely story! Who says their prayers at this time of the day! No, no; that won't pass upon me. Let me look—Very pretty! So, so, I see there's somebody else at his prayers too——fine doings!——As soon as the company goes, I shall take care to inform madam your mother.

Jack. Nay, but Mrs Betty, you won't be so—

Bet. Indeed, Mr John, but I shall—I'll swallow none of your secrets, believe me.

Jack. What, perhaps your stomach is overloaded already?

Bet. No matter for that, I shall be even with miss for telling master about and concerning my drums.

Jack. Why, Mrs Betty, surely sister could not—

Bet. When she very well knows that I have not sent cards but twice the whole season.

Jack. Lord! what signi——

Bet. What would she say, if she visited the great families I do? For though I am, as I may say, but a commoner, no private gentlewoman's gentlewoman has a more prettier set of acquaintance.

Jack. Well, but——

Bet. My routs indeed! There is Mrs Allspice, who lives with lady Cicely Sequence, has six tables every Sunday, besides loopers and braggers; and moreover, proposes giving a masquerade the beginning of June, and I intends being there.

Jack. Well, but to talk calmly.

Bet. And as miss is so fond of fetching and carrying, you may tell her we are to have a private play among ourselves, as the quality have: the Distrustful Mother, 'tis called—Pylades, by Mr Thomas, lord Catastrophe's butler—Hermione, Mrs Allspice; and I shall do Andromache myself.

Jack. A play! Lord, Mrs Betty, will you give me a ticket?

Bet. All's one for that—and so you may tell miss that. [*Bell rings.*] Coming, madam, this

minute——And that, Mr John, is the long and the short on't. [*Bell rings again.*] Lord, I am coming—— [*Exit.*

Enter WOODFORD.

Wood. What's the matter?

Jack. Here, Betty, my mother's fac-totum, has just discovered your haunts, and is gone to lay an information against you—so, depend upon it, a search-warrant will issue directly.

Wood. Stay but a moment till I take leave of your sister.

Jack. Zooks! I tell you the constables will be here in a trice, so you have not a moment to lose.

Wood. How unlucky this is!

Jack. But I hope you have obtained a verdict, however?

Wood. No.

Jack. No!

Wood. It would not have been decent to have pressed the judge too soon for a sentence.

Jack. Soon! You are a ninny, I tell you so: Here you will suffer judgment to go by default. You are a pretty practitioner indeed!

Wood. This, you may know, my dear Jack, is an equity case: I have but just filed my bill; one must give the parties time to put in an answer.

Jack. Time! How you may come off in court I can't tell, but you will turn out but a poor chamber-counsel, I fear. Well, come along, perhaps I may be able to procure another hearing before it is—But, Lord o'mercy! there is father crossing the hall—should he see us, all's over—we have nothing for't but taking shelter with sister. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter SIR LUKE LIMP, MRS CIRCUIT, COLONEL SECRET, *and* MRS SIMPER, *discovered at a table, with a collation before them.*

Mrs Cir. OH! by the by, sir Luke—take some of these sweetmeats, my dear—[*To* MRS SIM.]—Did not you promise to introduce to me that little agreeable piece of imperfection that belongs to the opera? Colonel, won't you taste the champaign?

Sir Luke. Who, Signior Piano? Let me assist Mrs Simper. Why, madam, I made an attempt; but at present—shan't I send you a biscuit?—he is in the possession of a certain lady, who never suffers him out of her sight for a moment.

Mrs Sim. Oh! the curmudgeon!—I am vastly fond of these custards.

Sir Luke. Yes, they have a delicate flavour—but he promised, if possible, to escape for an hour—won't you? [*To* MRS CIRCUIT.]

Mrs Cir. No, it gives me the heart-burn—Then let us leave him a cover.

Col. By all means in the world.

Mrs Cir. But there is, likewise, another party, for whom a place ought to be kept.

Mrs Sim. Another: who can that be, I wonder?

Mrs Cir. A small appendix of mine.

Sir Luke. How, madam!

Mrs Cir. You need not be jealous, sir Luke. Taste that tart, Mrs Simper. It is only my husband the serjeant—Ha, ha, ha! Betty makes them herself.

Mrs Sim. Oh! you abominable creature! how could such a thought come into your head?

Sir Luke. Madam—[*Offering sweetmeats to* MRS SIMPER.]

Mrs Sim. Not a bit more, I thank you. I swear and vow I should swoon at the sight.

Mrs Cir. And I should receive him with the polite indifference of an absolute stranger.

Sir Luke. Well said, my good Lady Intrepid! But, notwithstanding, I would venture a trifle that his appearance would give you such an electrical shock——

Mrs Cir. You are vastly deceived.

Sir Luke. Dare you come to the proof? Will you give me leave to introduce Mr Serjeant? He is not far off.

Mrs Cir. What, my husband?

Sir Luke. Even he! I saw him as I entered the hall.

Mrs Cir. Impossible!

Sir Luke. Nay, then I must fetch him.

[*Exit* SIR LUKE.

Col. I can't conceive what the knight would be at.

Mrs Sim. Why, he is mad.

Mrs Cir. Or turned fool.

Enter SIR LUKE, *with the Serjeant's peruke on a block.*

Sir Luke. Now, madam, have I reason? Is this your husband or not?

Mrs Sim. It is he! not the least doubt can be made.

Col. Yes, yes, it is the Serjeant himself.

Mrs Cir. I own it; I acknowledge the lord of my wishes. [*Kisses the block.*

Mrs Sim. All his features are there!

Col. The grave cast of his countenance!

Sir Luke. The vacant stare of his eye!

Mrs Cir. The livid hue of his lips!

Mrs Sim. The rubies with which his cheeks are enriched!

Col. The silent solemnity when he sits on the bench!

Mrs Cir. We must have him at table; but pray, good folks, let my husband appear like himself. I'll run for the gown. [*Exit.*

Mrs Sim. By all means in the world!

Sir Luke. Dispatch, I beseech you!

MRS CIRCUIT *returns with a gown and band.*

Mrs Cir. Sir Luke, lend your assistance.

Col. There, place him at the head of the table.

[*They fix the head at the back of a chair, and place it at table; then all sit.*]

Mrs Sim. Madam, you'll take care of your husband.

Mrs Cir. I don't want to be put in mind of my duty.

Mrs Sim. Oh, madam! I know that very well.

Sir Luke. Come, Hob or Nob, Mr Circuit—let us try if we can't fuddle the Serjeant.

Col. O fye! have a proper respect for the coif.

Mrs Sim. Don't be too facetious, sir Luke: it is not quite so safe to sport with the heads of the law; you don't know how soon you may have a little business together.

Sir Luke. But come, the Serjeant is sulky. I have thought of a way to divert him: You know he is never so happy as when he is hearing a cause: suppose we were to plead one before him: Mrs Circuit and I to be counsel, the colonel the clerk, and Mrs Simper the crier?

Mrs Cir. The finest thought in the world! And, stay, to conduct the trial with proper solemnity, let's rummage his wardrobe; we shall there be able to equip ourselves with suitable dresses.

Sir Luke. Allons! allons!

Mrs Sim. There is no time to be lost.

[*All rise.*

Mrs Cir. [*Stopping short as they are going out.*] But won't my husband be angry, if we leave him alone? B'ye, dearee——we shall soon return to thee again. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Serjeant CIRCUIT, *not perceiving the collation.*

Ser. So, my lord not being able to sit, there was no occasion for me. I can't put that girl's nonsense out of my head—my wife is young, to be sure, and love's pleasure, I own; but, as to the main article, I have not the least ground to suspect her in that—No, no!—And then, sir Luke! my *prosien ami*, the dearest friend I have in the —Heyday! [*Seeing the collation.*] What the deuce have we here?—A collation!—So, so—I see madam knows how to divert herself during my absence. What's this? [*Seeing the block.*] Oh, ho! ha, ha, ha!—Well, that's pretty enough. I protest—Poor girl! I see she could not be happy without having something at table that resembled me. How pleased she will be to find me here in *propria persona!* By your leave, Mrs Circuit—[*Sits down and eats.*] Delicate eating, in troth—and the wine [*Drinks.*]—Champaign, as I live!—must have t'other glass—They little think how that gentleman there regales himself in their absence—Ha, ha, ha!—quite convenient, I vow—the heat of the weather has made me——Come, brother coif, here's your health—[*Drinks.*] I must pledge myself I believe—[*Drinks again.*]—devilish strong—pshut! Somebody's coming—[*Gets up, and goes towards the wings.*] What do I see? Four lawyers! What the devil can be the meaning of this? I should be glad to get at the bottom of—Hey! By your leave, brother Serjeant—I must crave the use of your robe—[*Sits down, and gets under the gown.*] Between ourselves, this is not the first time this gown has covered a fraud.

Enter SIR LUKE, COLONEL, MRS CIRCUIT, *and* MRS SIMPER, *dressed as Counsellors.*

Sir Luke. Come, come, gentlemen, dispatch, the court has been waiting some time. Brother Circuit, you have looked over your brief?

Mrs Cir. What, do you suppose, sir, that, like some of our brethren, I defer that till I come into court? No, no!

Sir Luke. This cause contains the whole marrow and pith of all modern practice.

Mrs Cir. One should think, sir Luke, you had been bred to the bar.

Sir Luke. Child, I was some years in the temple; but the death of my brother robbed the robe of my labours.

Mrs Sim. What a loss to the public!

Sir Luke. You are smart, Mrs Simper. I can tell you, Serjeant Snuffle, whose manner I studied, pronounced me a promising youth.

Mrs Sim. I don't doubt it.

Sir Luke. But let us to business. And, first, for the state of the case: The parties, you know, are Hobson and Nobson? the object of litigation is a small parcel of land, which is to decide the fate of a borough.

Mrs Cir. True; called Turnbury Mead.

Sir Luke. Very well. Then, to bring matters to a short issue, it was agreed, that Nobson should on the premises cut down a tree, and Hobson bring his action of damage.

Mrs Cir. True, true.

Sir Luke. The jury being sworn, and the counsellors feed, the court may proceed.—Take your seats—But hold—I hope no gentleman has been touched on both sides?

All. Oh! fye!

Sir Luke. Let silence be called.

Mrs Sim. Silence in the court!

Sir Luke. But stop. To be regular, and pro-

vide for fresh causes, we must take no notice of the borough and lands, the real objects in view, but stick fast to the tree, which is of no importance at all.

All. True, true.

Sir Luke. Brother Circuit, you may proceed.

Mrs Cir. Gentlemen of the jury.—I am in this cause counsel for Hobson the plaintiff.—The action is brought against Nebuchadnezzar Nobson, that he the said Nobson did cut down a tree, value twopence, and to his own use said tree did convert—Nobson justifies, and claims tree as his tree. We will, gentlemen, first state the probable evidence, and then come to the positive; and, first as to the probable.—When was this tree here belonging to Hobson, and claimed by Nobson, cut down? Was it cut down publicly in the day, in the face of the sun, men, women, and children, all the world looking on?—No; it was cut down privately, in the night, in a dark night, nobody did see, nobody could see.—Hum—And then with respect and regard to this tree, I am instructed to say, gentlemen, it was a beautiful, an ornamental tree to the spot where it grew. Now, can it be thought that any man would come for to go in the middle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody did see, nobody could see, and cut down a tree, which tree was an ornamental tree, if tree had been his tree?—Certainly no.—And again, gentlemen, we moreover insist, this tree was not only ornamental to the spot where it grew, but it was a useful tree to the owner; it was a plumb-tree, not only a plumb-tree, but I am authorized to say, the best of plumb-trees; it was a damsin plumb. Now, can it be thought, that any man would come for to go, in the middle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody did see, nobody could see, and cut down a tree; which tree was not only an ornamental tree, but a useful tree; and not only a useful tree, but a plumb-tree; and not only a plumb-tree, but the best of plumb-trees, a damsin-plumb? Most assuredly no.—If so be then that this be so, and so it most certainly is, I apprehend no doubt will remain with the court, but my client a verdict will have, with full costs of suit, in such a manner, and so forth, as may nevertheless appear notwithstanding.

Sir Luke. Have you done, Mr Serjeant?

Mrs Cir. You may proceed.

Sir Luke. Gentlemen of the jury—I am in this cause counsel for Hob—Zounds! I think the head moves.

All. Hey!

Col. No, no, Mrs Simper jogged the chair with her foot, that was all.

Sir Luke. For Hercules Hobson—(I could have sworn it had stirred)—I shan't, gentlemen, upon this occasion, attempt to move your passions, by flowing periods and rhetorical flowers, as Mr Serjeant has done; no, gentlemen, if I get at your hearts, I will make my way through your heads, however thick they may be.—In order to which, I will pursue the learned gentleman through what he calls his probable proofs: and, first, as to this tree's being cut down in the night; in part we will grant him that point, but, under favour, not a dark night, Mr Serjeant; no, quite the reverse; we can prove that the moon shone bright, with uncommon lustre that night—So that if so be as how people did not see, that was none—[SERJEANT *sneezes.*] Nay, Mrs Circuit, if you break the thread of my—

Mrs Cir. Me break!——I said nothing I'm sure.

Sir Luke. That's true, but you sneezed.

Mrs Cir. Not I.

Sir Luke. I am sure somebody did; it could not be the head—consider the least interruption puts one out of one's—None of our faults, they might have looked on, and seen if they would. And then as to this beautiful tree, with which Mr Serjeant has ornamented his spot—no, gentlemen, no such matter at all; I am instructed to say quite the reverse: a stunted tree, a blighted, blasted tree; a tree, not only limbless, and leafless, but very near lifeless; that was the true state of the tree; and then as to its use, we own it was a plumb-tree indeed, but not of the kind Mr Serjeant sets forth, a damsin plumb; our proofs say loudly a bull-plumb; but if so be, and it had been a damsin plumb, will any man go for to say, that a damsin plumb is the best kind of plumb? not a whit. I take upon me to say, it is not a noun substantive plumb—with plenty of sugar it does pretty well indeed in a tart; but to eat it by itself, will Mr Serjeant go to compare it with the queen-mother, the padrigons—

Ser. [*Appearing suddenly from under the gown.*] The green gages, or the orlines?

Mrs Cir. As I live 'tis my husband!

Ser. Nay, sir Luke, don't you run away, too—give me a buss—since I was born, I never heard a finer reply; I am sorry I did not hear your argument out—but I could not resist.

Sir Luke. This, I own, was a little surprise—Had you been long here, Mr Serjeant?

Ser. But the instant you entered.

Sir Luke. So, then, all is safe. [*Aside.*

Ser. But, come! won't you refresh you, sir Luke—you have hard duty to-day.

Sir Luke. I drank very freely at table.

Ser. Nay, for the matter of that, I han't been idle. [*Both drink.*] But come, throw off your gown, and let us finish the bottle: I han't had such a mind to be merry I can't tell the day when.

Sir Luke. Nay, then, Mr Serjeant, have at you!—Come, here's long life and health to the law. [*Drinks.*

Ser. I'll pledge that toast in a bumper.—[*Drinks.*]—I'll take Charlotte's hint, and see if I can't draw the truth out of the knight by a bottle. [*Aside.*

Sir Luke. I'll try if I can't fuddle the fool, and get rid of him that way. [*Aside.*

Ser. I could not have thought it: why, where the deuce did you pick up all this? But by the by, pray who was the crier?

Sir Luke. Did not you know her? Mrs Simper, your neighbour.

Ser. A pestilent jade! she's a good one, I warrant.

Sir Luke. She is thought very pretty: what say you to a glass in her favour?

Ser. By all means in the world! [*They drink.*] And that spark the clerk?

Sir Luke. Colonel Secret, a friend to the lady you toasted.

Ser. A friend! oh, ay—I understand you—Come, let us join them together.

Sir Luke. Allons! [*Drinks.*] Egad, I shall be caught in my own trap! I begin to feel myself flustered already. [*Aside.*

Ser. Delicate white wine, indeed! I like it better every glass. [*Sings.*

Drink and drive care away,
Drink and be merry.

Sir Luke. True, my dear Serjeant—this is the searcher of secrets—the only key to the heart.

Ser. Right boy, in veritas vino.

Sir Luke. No deceit in a bumper. [*Sings.*] Drink and be merry.

Ser. Merry! damme, what a sweet fellow you are! what would I give to be half so jolly and gay!

Sir Luke. [*Appearing very drunk.*] Would you? and yet do you know, Serjeant, that at this very juncture of time, there is a thing has popped into my head, that distresses me very much.

Ser. Then drive it out with a bumper [*Drinks.*] Well, how is it now?

Sir Luke. Now!——the matter is not mended at all.

Ser. What the deuce is the business that so sticks in your stomach?

Sir Luke. You know, my dear Serjeant, I am your friend, your real, your affectionate friend.

Ser. I believe it, sir Luke.

Sir Luke. And yet, for these six months I have concealed a secret, that touches you near, very near——

Ser. Me near! That was wrong, very wrong! friends should have all things in common.

Sir Luke. That's what I said to myself: sir Luke, says I, open your heart to your friend. But to tell you the truth, what sealed up my lips, was the fear that this secret should make you sulky and sad.

Ser. Me sulky and sad! ha! ha! how little you know of me!

Sir Luke. Swear, then, thou won't be uneasy.

Ser. Well, I do.

Sir Luke. [*Rising.*] Soft! let us see that all's safe. Well, Mr Serjeant, do you know that you are—a fine, honest fellow.

Ser. Is that such a secret?

Sir Luke. Be quiet; a damned honest fellow ——but as to your wife——

Ser. Well?

Sir Luke. She is an infamous strum——

Ser. How! it is a falsehood, sir Luke! my wife is as virtuous a wom——

Sir Luke. Oh! if you are angry, your servant ——I thought that the news would have pleased you—for, after all, what is the business to me! What do I get by the bargain?

Ser. That's true; but then, would it not vex any man to hear his wife abused in such a—

Sir Luke. Not if its true, you old fool!

Ser. I say, it is false: prove it; give me that satisfaction, sir Luke.

Sir Luke. Oh! you shall have that pleasure directly; and to come at once to the point—you remember last new-year's day how severely it froze?

Ser. I do recollect.

Sir Luke. Very well; we were all invited to dine at alderman Inkle's.

Ser. Very right.

Sir Luke. Well, and I did not go: Mrs Circuit made me dine here in this house—Was it my fault?

Ser. No, no, sir Luke, no.

Sir Luke. At table, says she—she said, I was the picture of you—Was it my fault?

Ser. Well, and suppose you are? where's the mischief in that?

Sir Luke. Be quiet, I tell you.—Then, throwing her arms round my neck—it is my husband himself I embrace; it is my little old man that I kiss!——for she has a prodigious affection for you at bottom——Was it my fault?

Ser. But what is there serious in this? dost think I mind such trifles?

Sir Luke. Hold your tongue, you fool, for a moment—Then, throwing her teresa aside—upon my soul she is prodigious fine every where here ——Was it my fault?

Ser. My fault! my fault! I see no fault in all this.

Sir Luke. [*Hatching a cry.*]—No! why then, my dear friend, do you know that I was so unworthy, so profligate, so abandoned—as to—[*Rises.*] say no more, the business is done.

Ser. Ay, indeed?

Sir Luke. Oh! fact! there is not the least doubt of the matter; this is no hear-say, dy'e see; I was by all the while.

Ser. Very pretty! very fine, upon my word!

Sir Luke. Was it my fault? what could I do? put yourself in my place; I must have been more or less than man to resist.

Ser. Your fault, sir Luke! no, no—you did but your duty—But as to my wife———

Sir Luke. She's a diabolical fiend; I shall hate her as long as I live.

Ser. And I too.

Sir Luke. Only think of her forcing me, as it were with a sword at my breast, to play such a trick; you, my dear Serjeant, the best, truest friend I have in the world!

[*Weeps.*

Ser. [*Weeping.*] Dry your tears, dear sir Luke; I shall ever gratefully acknowledge your confidence in trusting me with the secret—[*Taking him forward.*] But I think it might be as well kept from the rest of the world.

Sir Luke. My dear soul, do you think I would tell it to any mortal but you? No, no, not to my brother himself—You are the only man upon earth I would trust.

Ser. Ten thousand thanks, my dear friend! sure there is no comfort, no balsam in life like a friend—but I shall make madam Circuit remember—

Sir Luke. We neither of us ought to forgive her—Were I you, I'd get a divorce.

Ser. So I will—provided you will promise not to marry her after.

Sir Luke. Me! I'll sooner be torn to pieces by wild horses—No, my dear friend, we will retire to my house in the country together, and there, in innocence and simplicity, feeding our pigs and pigeons, like Pyramus and Thisbe, we will live the paragons of the age.

Ser. Agreed; we will be the whole earth to each other; for, as Mr Shakespur says,

'The friend thou hast, and his adoption tried,
'Clasp to thy soul, and quit the world beside.'—

Sir Luke. Zouns, here comes Madam Serjeant herself!

Enter MRS CIRCUIT.

Mrs Cir. So, gentlemen! a sweet tete-a-tete you have been holding—But I know it all; not a syllable you have said has been lost.

Sir Luke. Then I hope you have been well entertained, Mrs Circuit?

Mrs Cir. And you, you mean spirited, dastardly wretch, to lend a patient ear to his infamous, improbable tales, equally shameful both to you and me!

Ser. How, madam? have you the assurance—

Mrs Cir. Yes, sir, the assurance that innocence gives. There is not a soul, I thank heaven, that can lay the least soil, the least spot, on my virtue; nor is there a man on earth but yourself would have sat, and silently listened to the fictions and fables of this intemperate sot.

Ser. Why, to be sure, the knight is overtaken a little; very near drunk.

Sir Luke. I hope he believes it's a lie.

[*Aside.*

Mrs Cir. Do me instant justice on this defamer, this liar, or never more expect to see me in your house.

Ser. I begin to find out the fraud; this is all a flam of the knight's!

Mrs Cir. I'll drive this instant to a friend of mine in the Commons, and see if no satisfaction can be had, for blasting the reputation of a woman like me—And, hark you, sir, what inducement, what devil could prompt——

Ser. Ay; what devil could prompt——

Sir Luke. Heyday!

Mrs Cir. But I guess at your motive; you flattered yourself, that, by marrying Charlotte, and discarding of me, you should engross all his affections and——

Ser. True, true——Stop, my life, let me come at him a little: Hark you, Mr Knight? I begin to discover that you are a very sad dog.

Sir Luke. Et tu, Brute!

Ser. Brute!—you'll find I am not the brute you would have made me believe—I have considered both sides of the question.

Sir Luke. Both sides of the question!

Ser. Both. If your story is true, you are a scoundrel to debauch the wife of your friend; and if it is false, you are an infamous liar.

Sir Luke. Well argued!

Ser. So, in both cases, get out of my house!

Sir Luke. Nay, but, Serjeant——

Ser. Troop, I tell you, and never again enter these walls——you have libelled my wife, and I will see you no more.

Sir Luke. Was there ever such a——

Ser. March! And as to my daughter, I would as soon marry her to a forma pauperis client.

[*Exit* SIR LUKE.

Mrs Cir. Do you consider, Mr Circuit, where you are pushing the fellow?——That chamber is Charlotte's.

Enter SIR LUKE, WOODFORD, CHARLOTTE, *and* JACK.

Sir Luke. Heyday! who the deuce have we here?—Pray walk in, my good folks—Your servant, Miss Charlotte; your servant, Mr Whaddy'e-call-um.—Mr Serjeant, you need not trouble yourself to cater for Miss; your family, you see, can provide for themselves.

Ser. Heyday! What the deuce is all this? Who are you, sir, and how came you here?

[*To* WOODFORD.

Jack. It was I, father, that brought him.

Ser. How, sirrah!

Sir Luke. Well said, my young limb of the law!

Jack. Come, let us have none o' your—though I brought Mr Woodford, you could not persuade me to do the same office for you—Father, never stir if he did not make me the proffer, if I would let him into the house the night you was at

Kingston, of a new pair of silk stockings, and to learn me a minuet.

Sir Luke. Me! I should never have got you to turn out your toes.

Jack. Ay, and moreover, you made me push out my chest, and do so with my fingers, as if I was taking two pinches of snuff.

Sir Luke. You see, Mr Serjeant, what a fondness I have for every twig of your family.

Ser. I shall thank you hereafter—But from you, Charlotte, I expected other guess———

Char. When, sir, you hear this whole matter explained, you will acquit me I am sure.

Wood. Indeed, sir, I am wholly to blame; my being here was as much a surprise upon Miss Charlotte as———

Ser. But now you are here, pray what's your business?

Jack. O! father, I can acquaint you with that—he wanted me to bring a love-letter to Charlotte; so I told him he might bring it himself, for that I would not do any such thing for never so much, for fear of offending you.

Ser. You mended the matter, indeed——But, after all, who, and what are you?

Jack. Its the young gentleman that lives over our heads, to whom Mr Fairplay is guardian.

Ser. Who, Woodford?

Jack. The same.

Ser. And are you, young man, in a situation to think of a wife?

Wood. I am flattered, sir, that as justice is with me, I shall one day have no contemptible fortune to throw at her feet.

Ser. Justice is! What signifies justice?—Is the law with you, you fool?

Wood. With your help, sir, I should hope for their union, upon this occasion at least.

Ser. Well, sir, I shall re-consider your papers; and if there are probable grounds, I may be induced to hear your proposals.

Wood. Nay then, sir, the recovering my paternal possessions makes me anxious indeed.——— Could I hope that the young lady's good wishes would attend me?

Char. I have a father, and can have no will of my own.

Sir Luke. So, then, it seems poor Pil Garlick here is discarded at once!

Ser. Why, could you have the impudence, after what has happened to hope that———

Mrs Cir. He has given wonderful proofs of his modesty.

Sir Luke. Be quiet, Mrs Circuit—Come, good folks, I will set all matters to rights in a minute; and first, Mr Serjeant, it becomes me to tell you, that I never intended to marry your daughter.

Ser. How! never!

Sir Luke. Never. She is a fine girl, I allow; but would it now, Mr Serjeant, have been honest in me, to have robbed the whole sex of my person, and confined my favours to her?

Ser. How!

Sir Luke. No! I was struck with the immorality of the thing; and therefore, to make it impossible that you should ever give me your daughter, I invented the story I told you concerning Mrs Circuit and me.

Ser. How!

Sir Luke. Truth, upon my honour.——Your wife there, will tell you the whole was a lie.

Ser. Nay, then, indeed——But with what face can I look up to my dear? I have injured her beyond the hopes of forgiveness.—Would you, lovee, but pass an act of oblivion———

Sir Luke. See me here prostrate to implore your clemency in behalf of my friend.

Mrs Cir. Of that I can't determine directly.—But as you seem to have some sense of your guilt, I shall grant you a reprieve for the present, which contrition and amendment may, perhaps, in time swell into a pardon:

But if again offending you are caught!

Ser. Then let me suffer, dearee, as I ought.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

MAID OF BATH.

BY

FOOTE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN	WOMEN.
SIR CHRISTOPHER CRIPPLE, *an old debauchee.*	LADY CATHERINE COLDSTREAM, *a Scotch l quality.*
MR FLINT, *a miser.*	MRS LINNET.
MAJOR RACKET. *a man of fashion.*	MISS LINNET, *the Maid of Bath.*
BILLY BUTTON, *a tailor.*	*Maid.*
PETER POULTICE, *an apothecary.*	*Waiters, &c.*
FILLUP, *an inkeeper.*	
MYNHEER SOUR CROUT.	
MONS. DE JARSEY.	
JOHN.	

Scene—Bath.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Bear Inn at Bath.*

Enter FILLUP.

Fil. WHY, John, Roger, Raphy, Harry Buckle! what a dickens are become of the lads? Can't you hear?——Zure, zure, these whelps are enow to make a man mazed!

Enter several Waiters.

All. Coming, sir.

Fill. Coming! ay, zo be Christmass, I think—where be'st thee gwain, boy? What, I reckon thou ca'st not zee for thy eyes—here, take the c and light the gentlefolk in.

Enter JOHN.

John. Carry a couple of candles into Daphne. [*Exit Wa*

Fil. John, who is it be a come?

John. Major Racket, in a chay and four, fi the Devizes.

Ful. What, the young youth, that last ze carried away we'un Mrs Muzlinzes prentice?

John. Miss Patty Prim from the grove.

Fil. Ay, zure—thee dost know her well enow.

John. The same.

Fil. Zure, zure! then we shall have odd doings by and by; he's a deadly wild spark thee dost know—

John. But as good a customer as comes to the Bear.

Fil. That's zure enough: then, why dost not run and light them in? Stay, gy I the candle, I woole go, and light 'em in myzelf.

RACKET *without.*

Rac. Give the post-boys half a guinea between them.

John. Ay, there is some life in this chap! these are your guests that give spirit to Bath: your parylytical people, that come down to be par-boiled and pumped, do no good, that I know, to the town, unless indeed to the physical tribe. How I hate to see an old fellow hobble into the house, with his feet wrapt in flannel, pushing forth his fingers like a cross in the hands to point out the different roads on a common—— hush!

Enter RACKET *and* FILLUP.

Fil. I hope, mester, you do zee your way; there be two steps you do know; well, zure, I be heartily glad to zee your honour at Bath.

Rac. I thank you, my honest friend Fillup; what, have you many people in town?

Fil. There ben't a power, please your honour, at present; some zick folk that do no zort of zarvis, and a few layers that be come off a zircuit, that's all.

Rac. Birds of passage, ha, Fillup?

John. True, sir; for at the beginning of term, when the woodcocks come in, the others fly off.

Rac. Are you there, honest Jack?

John. And happy to see your honour in town.

Rac. Well, master Fillup, and how go you on?—Any clubs fixed as yet?

Fil. No, zir, not to zay fixed; there be parson Pulruddock from the Land's End; Master Evan Thomas, a Welch attorney, two Bristol men, and a few port drinking people that dine every day in the Lion; the claret club ben't expected down till the end of next week.—

Rac. Any body in the house that I know?

Fil. Yes, zure—behind the bar, there be sir Christopher Cripple, fresh out of a fit of the gout, drinking a drop of punch along wi mester Peter Poultice, the potter carrier on the Parade.

Rac. The gazettes of Bath, the very men I want; give my compliments to the gentlemen, and tell them I should be glad of their company—but perhaps it may be troublesome for sir Christopher?

Fil. No, no, not at all; at present he is a little tender for zure, but I warrant un he'll make a shift to hobble into the room.

[*Exit* FILLUP.

Rac. Well, Jack, and how fares it with you? you have throve, I hope, since I saw you?

John. Throve! no, no, sir; your honour knows that during the summer, taverns and turnspits have but little to do at Bath.

Rac. True; but what is become of your colleague, honest Ned? I hope he has not quitted his place?

John. The share he had in your honour's intrigue with Miss Prim, soon made this city too hot for poor Ned.

Rac. Then why did not the fool go to London with me! The fellow has humour, spirit, and sings a good song. I intended to have recommended him to one of the theatres.

John. Why, sir, Ned himself had a bias that way: but his uncle, alderman Surcingle the saddler, a piece of a puritan, would not give his consent.

Rac. Why not?

John. He was afraid that kind of life might corrupt or endanger Ned's morals; so he has set him up in a bagnio at the end of Long-Acre.

Rac. Nay, if the fellow falls after such a security———

Enter SIR CHRISTOPHER CRIPPLE, FILLUP, *and* PETER POULTICE.

Sir Chris. [*Without.*] At what a rate the rascal is running; Zounds! I believe the fellow thinks I can foot it as fast as Eclipse; slower and be——Where is this rakehelly rantipole?—Jack, set me a chair. So, sir; you must possess a good share of assurance to return to this town after the tricks you have played—Fillup, fetch in the punch—Well, you ungracious young dog, and what is become of the wench? Poor Patty! and here too my reputation is ruined, as well as the girl's.

Rac. Your reputation! that's a good jest.

Sir Chris. Yes, sirrah, it is; and all owing to my acquaintance with you; I, forsooth, am called your adviser! as if your contriving head and profligate heart stood in need of any assistance from me.

Rac. Well, but my dear sir Kit, how can this idle stuff affect you?

Sir Chris. How? easy enough; I will be judged now by Poultice—Peter, speak the truth; before this here blot in my escutcheon, have you not observed when I went to either a ball or breakfasting, how eager all the girls gathered round me, gibing, and joking, and giggling; gad take me, as facetious and free as if I were their father.

Poul. Nothing but truth.

Fil. That's truth, to my zertain knowledge,

for I have seen the women folk tittering till they were ready to break their sides when your honour was throwing your double tenders about.

Sir Chris. True, honest Fillup—before your curst affair, neither maid, widow, or wife was ashamed of conversing with me: but now, when I am wheeled into the room, not a soul under seventy will venture within ten yards of my chair; I am shunned worse than a leper in the days of king Lud; an absolute hermit in the midst of a croud. Speak, Fillup, is not this a melancholy truth?

Fil. Very molycholly zure.—

Sir Chris. But this is not all; the crop-eared curs of the city have taken into their empty heads to neglect me; formerly, Mr Mayor could not devour a custard, but I received a civil card to partake; but now, the rude rascals, in their bushy bobs, brush by me without deigning to bow; in short, I do not believe I have had a corporation crust in my mouth for these six months. You might as well expect a minister of state at the Mansion House, as see me at one of their feasts.

Fil. His honour tells nothing but truth.

Sir Chris. So that I am almost famished, as well as forsaken.

Fil. Quite famished, as a body may zay, mester.

Sir Chris. Oh! Tom, Tom, you have been a cursed acquaintance to me! what a number of fine turtle and fat haunches of venison has your wickedness lost me!

Rac. My dear sir Kit, for this I merit your thanks; how often has Dr Carawitchet told you, that your rich food and champaigne would produce nothing but poor health and real pain?

Sir Chris. What signifies the prattle of such a punning puppy as he? What, I suppose you would starve me, you scoundrel? When I am got out of one fit, how the devil am I to gather strength to encounter the next? Do you think it is to be done by sipping and slopping? [*Drinks.*] But no matter; look you, major Racket, all between us is now at an end; and, sir, I should consider it as a particular favour, if you would take no further notice of me; I sincerely desire to drop your acquaintance; and, as for myself, I am fixed, positively fixed, to reform.

Rac. Reform—ha, ha!

Sir Chris. Reform! and why not? You shall see, the whole city shall see; as soon as ever I get to my lodgings, I will send for Luke Lattitat and Codicil, and make a handsome bequest to the hospital.

Rac. Stuff!

Sir Chris. Then I am resolved to be carried every day to the twelve o'clock prayers, at the Abbey, and regularly twice of a Sunday.

Rac. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Chris. Ha, ha, ha! you may laugh, but I'll be damned if I don't! and, if all this don't recover my credit, I am determined, besides, to hire a house in Harlequin-Row, and be a constant hearer at the countess's chapel———

Rac. And so, perhaps, turn out a field preacher in time?

Sir Chris. I don't know but I may.

Rac. Well, then, my dear sir Christopher, adieu! but, if we must part, let us part as friends should, not with dry lips, and in anger; Fillup, take care of the knight. [FILLUP *fills the glasses.*] Well, faith, my old croney, I can't say but I am heartily sorry to lose you; many a brave batch have we broached in our time.

Sir Chris. True, Tom; true!

Rac. Don't you remember the bout we had at the Tuns, in the days of Plump Jack? I shall never forget, after you had felled old Falstaff with a pint bumper of burgundy, how you bestrode the prostrate hero, and in his own manner cried, 'Crown me, ye spirits, that delight in generous wine!'

Sir Chris. Vanity, mere vanity, Tom! nothing but vanity!

Rac. And then, another day at the——but replenish, Fillup; the bowl is not empty.

Sir Chris. Enough, enough!

Rac. What, don't flinch, man! it is but to finish the——Come, sir Christopher, one tender squeeze!

Sir Chris. Take care of my hand; none of your old tricks, you young dog!

Rac. Gentle as the lick of a lap-dog! there—What a clock is it, Fillup?

Fill. I'll tell you, mester, [*Looks on his watch.*] just turned a zix——

Rac. So soon! hang it, sir Kit! it is too early to part! come, what say you to one supper more? but one to the sacred feelings of friendship—honest Fillup knows your taste, he will toss you up a——

Sir Chris. Not a morsel, Tom, if you would give me the universe.

Rac. Poh, man! only a Sandwich or so—Fillup, what hast got in the house?

Fill. A famous John Dorey, two pair of soles, and there be a joint of Lansdown mutton; and, then, you do know, my Molly be vamous in making marrow-puddings.

Rac. A fine bill of fare! Come, knight, what do you choose?

Sir Chris. Me! why you seem to have forgot what I told you just now———

Rac. Your design to reform——not at all—and I think you quite right; perfectly so, as I hope to be saved; but what needs all this hurry? to-morrow is a new day; it will then be early enough———Fillup, send us in just what you will.

Sir Chris. You are a coaxing, cajoling young dog. Well, if it must be so, Fillup, it must; Fillup, get me an anchovy toast, and—do you hear—and a red herring or two, for my stomach is damnably weak.

Fill. I shall, to be sure. [*Exit.*

Rac. So, that's settled—now, Poultice, come forward: well, my blades, and what news have you stirring amongst you?

Poul. Except a little run of sore throats about the beginning of autumn, and a few feeble fellows, that dropt off with the leaves of October, the town is intolerable———

Rac. Pox of the dead and the dying! but what amusements have you got for the living?

Poul. There is the new play-house, you know——

Rac. True; but as to the musical world, what hopes have we there? any of the opera people among you? apropos—what is become of my little flame, La Petite Rosignole, the lively little Linnet? is she still——

Sir Chris. Lost, totally lost!———

Rac. Lost! what, left you? I am sorry for that.

Sir Chris. Worse, worse!

Rac. I hope she an't dead?

Sir Chris. Ten thousand times worse than all that.

Rac. How the deuce can that be?

Sir Chris. Just going to be buried alive—to be married!

Rac. Poh! is that all! That ceremony was, indeed, formerly looked upon as a kind of metaphysical grave, but the system is changed, and marriage is now considered as an entrance to a new and better kind of life.

Sir Chris. Indeed!

Rac. Pshaw! who talks now of the drudgery of domestic duties, of nuptial chains, and of bonds—mere obsolete words; they did well enough in the dull days of Queen Bess; but a modern lass puts on fetters to enjoy the more freedom, and pledges her faith to one, that she may be at liberty to bestow her favours on all.

Sir Chris. What vast improvements are daily made in our morals! what an unfortunate dog am I, to come into the world at least half a century too soon! what would I give to be born twenty years hence! there will be damned fine doings, then, hey, Tom! But I'm afraid our poor little girl won't have it in her power to profit by these prodigious improvements.

Rac. Why not?

Sir Chris. Oh, when once you hear the name of her partner———

Rac. Who is it?

Sir Chris. An acquaintance of yours—only that old fusty, shabby, shuffling, money-loving, water-drinking, mirth-marring, amorous old hunks, Master Solomon Flint.

Rac. He, that enjoys—I mean, owns, half the farms in the country?

Sir Chris. He, even he!

Rac. Why, he is sixty at least; what a filthy old goat! but, then, how does this design suit with his avarice? the girl has no fortune.

Sir Chris. No more than what her talents will give her.

Rac. Why, the poltroon does not mean to profit by them?

Sir Chris. Perhaps, if his family should chance to increase—but I believe his main motive is the hopes of an heir.

Rac. For which he must be indebted to some of his neighbours; in that point of light, indeed, the matter is not so much amiss; it is impossible she can be fond of the fellow; and it is very hard, with the opportunities that this place will afford, if in less than a month I don't———

Sir Chris. This place! why you don't think he'll trust her here for an hour?

Rac. How!

Sir Chris. Not a moment; the scheme is all settled; the rumbling old family-coach carries her immediately from the church door to his moated, haunted old house in the country.

Rac. Indeed!

Sir Chris. Where, besides the Argus himself, she will be watched by no less than two brace of his sisters, four as malicious, musty old maids, as ever were soured by solitude, and the neglect of the world.

Rac. A guard not to be corrupted or cozened. Why, sir Christopher, in a christian country, this must not be suffered—What! a miserable tattered old fellow like him to monopolize such a tempting creature as her!

Sir Chris. A diabolical plan!

Rac. Besides, the secluding and immuring a girl possessed of her elegant talents, is little better than robbing the world.

Sir Chris. Infamous! worse than a rape! but where are the means to prevent it?

Rac. Much might be done, if you would lend us your aid.

Sir Chris. Me! of what use can I—and so, you rascal, you want to employ me again as your pimp?

Rac. You take the thing wrong; I only wish you to stand forth, my dear knight, and, like myself, be the protector of innocence, and a true friend to the public.

Sir Chris. A true friend to the public! a fine stalking horse that! but I fear, like other pretenders, Tom, when your own private purpose is served, the poor public will be left in the lurch: but, however, the poor girl does deserve to be saved, and if I could do any thing not inconsistent with my plan of reforming———

Rac. That was spoke like yourself——upon what terms are you and Flint at present?

Sir Chris. Oil and vinegar are not so opposite.

Rac. Poultice, you smoke a pipe with him sometimes; pray, who are your party?

Poul. Mynheer Sour Crout, Monsieur de Jarsey, the port manufacturer, Billy Button, the tai-

lor, Master Flint and I, most evenings take a whiff here.

Rac. Are you all in his confidence on this great occasion?

Poul. Upon this case we have had consultations; but Billy Button is first in his favour; he likes his prescription the best.

Rac. From this quarter we must begin the attack. Could we not contrive to convene this illustrious senate to-night?

Poul. I should think easily enough.

Rac. But before you meet here?

Poul. Without doubt.

Rac. My dear Poultice, will you undertake the commission?

Poul. I will feel their pulses, to oblige sir Christopher Cripple.

Sir Chris. But, Peter, dost really think this rash fool is determined?

Poul. I believe, sir Christopher, he is firmly persuaded, that nothing will allay this uncommon heat in his blood, but swallowing the pill matrimonial.

Rac. We must contrive at least to take off the gilding, and see what effect that will have on his courage. [*Exit* POULTICE.

Sir Christ. Well, major, unfold; what can you mean by this meeting?

Rac. Is it possible you can be at a loss, you, who have so long studied mankind!

Sir Chris. Explain.

Rac. Can't you conceive what infinite struggles must have been felt by this fellow, before he could muster up courage to engage in this dreadful, perilous state? How often have you heard the proverbial puppy affirm, that marriage was fishing for a single eel among a barrel of snakes? What infinite odds, that you laid hold of the eel, and then a million to one but he slipt through your fingers?

Sir Chris. True, true!

Rac. Can't you, then, guess what will be his feelings and fears, when it comes to the push? Do you think the public opinion, his various doubts of himself, and of her, the pride of his family, and the loud claims of avarice, his ruling passion 'till now, won't prove near an equipoise to his love?

Sir Chris. Without doubt.

Rac. At the critical period, won't the concurring advice of all his associates, think you, destroy the balance at once?

Sir Chris. Very probably, Tom, I confess.

Rac. As to our engines, there is no fear of them. Billy Button you have under your thumb; I'll purchase a pipe of port of De Jarsey, and we are sure of old Sour Crout for a hamper of hock.

Sir Chris. Right, right; but, after all, what is to become of the girl? Come, Tom, I'll have no foul play shown to her.

Rac. Her real happiness is part of my project.

Enter FILLUP.

Fill. Here be Mynheer Sour Crout and Monseer De Jarsey a come.

Sir Chris. We will attend them—only think, Tom, what a villain you will be to make me the secret instrument of any more mischief!

Rac. Never fear.

Sir Chris. Particularly, too, now I am fixed to reform.

Rac. It would be criminal in the highest degree.

Sir Chris. Ay, rot your hypocritical face! I am half afraid, Tom, to trust you; I'll be hanged, if you han't some wicked design yourself on the girl; but, however, I wash my hands of the guilt.

Rac. My dear knight, don't be so squeamish; but—the gentlemen within—stay—who have we here—Ah, my old friend Master Button——

Enter BUTTON.

But. Your worship is welcome to town—but where is sir—Oh—I understood as how your honour had sent for me all in a hurry. I should have brought the patterns before, if I had them; the worst of my enemies can't say but Billy Button is punctual; here they be! I received them to-night by Wiltshire's waggon, that flies in eight days.

Sir Chris. To-morrow, Billy, will do; take a seat.

But. I had rather stand——

Sir Chris. I wanted to talk to you upon another affair——what, I suppose, you are very busy at present?

But. Vast busy, your honour.

Sir Chris. This marriage, I reckon, takes up most of your time?

But. Your honour!

Rac. Miss Linnet, and your old Master Flint, you know.

But. Oh, ay! but the squire does not intend to cut a dash till the spring.

Sir Chris. No! nothing happened? I hope affairs are all fixed?

But. As a rock; I am sure now, it cannot fail; because why I have peremptory orders to scour and new line the coachman and footman's old frocks: and am, besides, to turn the lace, and fresh button the suit his honour made up twenty years ago comes next Lent, when he was sheriff for the county.

Rac. Nay, then, it is determined.

But. Or he would never have gone to such an expence.

Sir Christ. Well, Billy! and what is your private opinion, after all, of this match?

But. It is not becoming, your honour knows, for a tradesman like me to give his————

Rac. Why not? don't you think now, Billy, it is a bold undertaking for a man at his time of life?

But. Why, to be sure, his honour is a little stricken in years, as a body may say; and take all the care that one can, time will wear the nap from even superfine cloth: stitches tear, and elbows will out, as they say.

Sir Chris. And besides, Bill, the bride's a mere baby!

But. Little better, your honour! but she is a light bit of stuff, and I am confident will turn out well in the wearing—I once had some thoughts myself of taking measure of miss.

Rac. Indeed!

But. Yes; and, to my thinking, had made a pretty good progress; because, why, at church of a Sunday, she suffered me to look for the lessons, and moreover, many time and oft we have sung psalms out of the very same book.

Rac. That was going a great way.

But. Nay, besides and more than all that, she has, at this precious minute of time, a pincushion by her side of my own presentation.

Rac. Ay! and how came the treaty broke off?

But. Why, who should step in, in the nick, but the very squire himself?

Sir Chris. I am afraid, Bill, your beauty is a little bit of the jilt.

But. No, your worship, it is all along with her mother; cause her great aunt, by her father's side, was a clergyman's daughter, she is as pragmatic and proud as the Pope; so, forsooth, nothing will please her for miss, but a bit of quality binding.

Rac. I knew the refusal could not come from the girl; for, without a compliment, Billy, there is no comparison between you and she—why you are a pretty, slight, tight, light, nimble——

But. Yes—very nimble and slight, and we are both of a height—ha, ha, ha!

Sir Chris. Why, love has made Billy a poet!

But. No, no; quite an accident, as I hope to be kissed.

Rac. And your rival is a fusty, foggy, lumbering log.

But. For all the world like my goose: plaguy hot, and damned heavy, your honour!

Sir Chris. Why Billy blazes to-day!

But. And though my purse, mayhap, ben't so heavy as his'n, yet I contrive to pay every body their own.

Rac. I dare say.

But. Ay, and have besides two houses in Avon-Street; and, perhaps, a bit or two of land in a corner.

Sir Chris. O! the curmudgeonly rogue!

But. And, moreover, if Madam Linnet talks of families, I would have her to know, that I have powerful relations as well as herself—there's Tommy Button, my uncle's own son, that has an employment under the government——

Sir Chris. Ay, Billy, what is it?

But. At this very time he is an exciseman at Wapping: and, besides, there is my cousin Paul Puff, that kept the great pastry-cook's shop in the Strand, now lives at Brentford, and is made a justice of the peace.

Rac. As this is the case, I don't think it will be difficult yet to bring matters to bear.

Sir Chris. If Billy will but follow directions.

But. I hope your honour never found me deficient.

Sir Chris. We will instruct you farther within. Major Racket, your hand.

But. Let me help you; folks may go farther and fare worse, as they say—why, I have some thoughts, if I can call in my debts, to retire into the country, and set up for a gentleman.

Rac. Why not! one meets with a great number of them, who were never bred to the business.

But. I an't much of a mechanic at present; I does but just measure and cut.

Rac. No!

But. I don't think that I have sat cross-legged for these six years.

Rac. Indeed!

But. And who can tell, your honour, in a few years, if I behaves well, but, like cousin Puff, I may get myself put in the commission.

Sir Chris. The worshipful William Button, Esquire—it sounds well. I can tell you, Billy; there have been magistrates made of full as bad materials as you.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter MRS LINNET *and* MISS.

Mrs Lin. YES, Kitty, it is in vain to deny it. I am convinced there is some little, low, paltry passion, that lurks in your heart.

Miss Lin. Indeed, my dear mother, you wrong me.

Mrs Lin. Indeed, my dear miss, but I don't; what else could induce you to reject the addresses of a lover like this? Ten thousand pounds a year! Gads my life! there is not a lady in town would refuse him, let her rank be ever so——

Miss Lin. Not his fortune, I firmly believe.

Mrs Lin. Well; and who, now-a-days, marries any thing ele? Would you refuse an estate, because it happened to be a little encumbered? You must consider the man in this case as a kind of mortgage.

Miss Lin. But the disproportion of years—

Mrs Lin. In your favour, child; the incumbrance will be the sooner removed.

Miss Lin. Then, my dear mother, our minds; how very widely they differ! my nature is liberal and frank, though I am but a little removed from mediocrity; his heart, in the very bosom of wealth, is shut to every social sensation——

Mrs Lin. And yet, miss, this heart you have had the good luck to unlock. I hope you don't urge his offers to you as a proof of his passion for money? why, you forget yourself, Kate; who, in the name of wonder, do you think you are? what, because you have a baby face, and can bawl a few ballads——

Miss Lin. Nay, madam, you know I was never vain of my talents; if they can procure me a decent support, and in some measure repay my father and you for their kind cultivation——

Mrs Lin. And how long are you sure your talents, as you call them, will serve you? Are a set of features secure against time? won't a single sore throat destroy the boasted power of your pipe? But suppose that should not fail. who can insure you against the whim of the public? will they always continue their favour?

Miss Lin. Perhaps not.

Mrs Lin. What must become of you then? now, by this means you are safe, above the reach of ill-fortune. Besides, child, to put your own interest out of the question, have you no tender feelings for us? Consider, my love, you don't want for good nature; your consent to this match will, in the worst of times, secure a firm and able friend to the family.

Miss Lin. You deceive yourself, indeed, my dear mother; he, a friend! I dare believe the first proof you will find of his friendship, will be his positive commands to break off all correspondence with every relation I have.

Mrs Lin. That's a likely story, indeed!—— Well, child, I must set your father to work; I find what little weight my arguments have.

[LADY CATHERINE COLDSTREAM *without.*] Is Mrs Linnet within?

Mrs Lin. Oh! here comes a protectress of yours, lady Catherine Coldstream; submit the matter to her; she can have no views, is well read in the ways of the world, and has your interest sincerely at heart.

Enter LADY CATHARINE COLDSTREAM.

Lady Cath. How is aw wi you, Mestress Linnet and miss? what a dykens is the matter wi miss?—she seems got quite in the dumps. I thought you were aw ready to jump out of your skins at the bonny prospect afore you.

Mrs Lin. Indeed, I wish your ladyship would take Kitty to task, for what I can say signifies nothing.

Lady Cath. Ah, that's aw wrang; what has been the matter, Miss Kitty? you ken well enow that children owe an implicit concession to their parents—it is na for bairns to litigate the will of their friends?

Mrs Lin. Especially, my lady, in a case where their own happiness is so nearly concerned: there is no persuading her to accept Mr Flint's offers.

Lady Cath. Gad's mercy, miss, how comes aw this about? dinna you think you hae drawn a braw ticket in the lottery of life? do na you ken that the mon is the laird of aw the land in the country?

Miss Lin. Your ladyship knows, madam, that real happiness does not depend upon wealth.

Lady Cath. Ah, miss, but it is a bonny ingredient! don't you think, Mrs Linnet, the lass has got some other lad in her head?

Mrs Lin. Your ladyship joins in judgment with me; I have charged her, but she stoutly denies it.

Lady Cath. Miss, you munna be bashful; as you solicit a cure, your physician must ken the cause of your malady.

Miss Lin. Your ladyship may believe me, madam, I have no complaint of that kind.

Lady Cath. The lass is obstinate; Mestress Linnet, cannot yoursel gi a guess?

Mrs Lin. I can't say that I have observed—indeed, some time ago, I was inclined to believe Mr Button——

Lady Cath. What, yon taylor in Stall-street? ah, Mrs Linnet, you are aw out in your guess; the lass is ow'r weel bred, and ow'r saucy to gi her

heart to sik a burgis as he. Willy Button! nae, he is nae the lad avaw.

Mrs Lin. Major Racket, I once thought—but your ladyship knows his affairs took a different turn.

Lady Cath. Ah, Racket! that's another man's matter; lasses are apt enow to set their hearts upon scarlet; a cockade has muckle charms wi our sex: well, miss, comes the wind fra that corner!

Miss Lin. Does your ladyship think, to dislike Mr Flint, it is absolutely necessary to have a prepossession for somebody else?

Lady Cath. Mrs Linnet, an you will withdraw for a while, perhaps miss may throw aff her reserve, when there's nobody by but ourselves; a mother, you ken weel, may prove ane ow'r mony sometimes.

Mrs Lin. Your ladyship is most exceedingly kind—d'ye hear, Kitty, mind what her ladyship says; do, my dear, and be ruledby your friends; they are older and wiser than you. [*Exit.*

Lady Cath. Well, miss, what's the cause of aw this? what makes you so averse to the will of your friends?

Miss Lin. Your ladyship knows Mr Flint?

Lady Cath. Ah, unco weel.

Miss Lin. Can your ladyship then be at a loss for a cause?

Lady Cath. I canna say Mr Flint is quite an Adonis; but wha is it that in matrimony gets aw they wish? When I intermarried with sir Launcelot Coldstream, I was een sick a spree lass as yoursel; and the baronet bordering upon his grand climacteric; you mun ken, miss, my father was so unsonsy as to gang out with Charley in the forty-five, after which, his fidelity was rewarded in France by a commission, that did na bring in a bawbee, and a pension, that he never was paid.

Miss Lin. Infamous ingratitude!

Lady Cath. Ay, but I dinna think they will find ony mare sic fools in the north.

Miss Lin. I hope not.

Lady Cath. After this, you canna think, miss, there was mickle siller for we poor bairns that were left; so that, in troth, I was glad to get an establishment; and ne'er heeded the disparity between my guidman and mysel.

Miss Lin. Your ladyship gave great proofs of your prudence; but my affairs are not altogether so desperate.

Lady Cath. Gad's-mercy, miss! I hope you dinna make any comparison between lady Catharine Coldstream, wha has the best blood in Scotland that rins in her veins—

Miss Lin. I hope your ladyship does not suppose—

Lady Cath. A lady lineally descended from the great Ossian himself, and allied to aw the illustrious houses abroad and at home——

Miss Lin. I beg, madam, your ladyship——

Lady Cath. And Kitty Linnet! a little play actor, wha gets applauded, or hissed, just e'en as the mobility wulls!

Miss Lin. I am extremely concerned that—

Lady Cath. Look'e, miss, I will cut matters short: you ken well enow, the first notice that e'er I took of you, was in your acting in Allan Ramsay's play of Patie and Roger? ere sine I hae been your fast friend; but an you continue obstinate, and will na succumb, I shall straitwith withdraw my protection.

Miss Lin. I shall be extremely unhappy in losing your ladyship's favour.

Lady Cath. Miss, that depends entirely on yoursel.

Miss Lin. Well, madam, as a proof how highly I rate it, and how desirous I am of obeying the commands of my parents, it shan't be my fault if their wishes are not accomplished.

Lady Cath. That's aw right now, Kitty; gi me a kiss, you are the prudent lass that I thought you. Love, miss, is a pastime for boys and grown girls; aw stuff fit for nathing but novels and romances; there is nathing solid, nae stability.

Miss Lin. Madam——

Lady Cath. But to fix your fortune at once, to get above the power of the world; that, child, is a serious concern.

MRS LINNET [*Without.*]

With your ladyship's leave——

Lady Cath. You may come in, Mrs Linnet; your daughter is brought to a proper sense of her duty, and is ready to coincide with your wish.

Mrs Lin. We are infinitely obliged to your ladyship; this is lucky indeed; Mr Flint is now, madam, below, and begs to be admitted.

Lady Cath. Ah! the mon comes in the nick: shew him in in the instant.

[*Exit* MRS LINNET.

Now Kitty's your time; dinna be shy, lass, but throw out aw your attractions, and fix him that he canna gang back.

Miss Lin. Madam, I hope to behave——

Lady Cath. Gad's mercy, how the girl trembles and quakes! come, pluck up a heart, and consider your aw is at stake.

Miss Lin. I am afraid I shall be hardly able to say a single——

Lady Cath. Suppose, then, you sing; gi' him a sang; there is nothing moves a love-sick loon mair than a sang—[*Noise without.*] I hear the lad on the stairs; but let the words be aw melting and saft—the Scotch tunes, you ken, are unco pathetic; sing him the Birks of Endermay, or the Braes of Ballendine, or the——

Enter FLINT *and* MRS LINNET.

Maister Flint, your servant. There, sir, you ken the lass of your heart; I have laid for you a

pretty solid foundation; but, as to the edifice, you must e'en erect it yoursel.

[*Exit* LADY CATHERINE.

Flint. Please your ladyship, I will do my endeavour. Madam Linnet, I have made bold to bring you a present, a small paper of tea, in my pocket—you will order the tea-kettle on.

Mrs Lin. O, sir, you need not have——

Flint. I won't put you to any expence.

[*Exit* MRS LINNET.

Well, miss, I understand here by my lady, that that she, that is, that you, with respect and regard to the——ah, ah—won't you please to be seated?

Miss Lin. Sir!—my lover seems as confused as myself. [*Aside.*

Flint. I say, miss, that, as I was saying, your friends here have spoke to you all how and about it.

Miss Lin. About it! about what?

Flint. About this here business, that I come about. Pray, miss, are you fond of the country?

Miss Lin. Of the country?

Flint. Ay; because why, I think it is the most prettiest place for your true lovers to live in—something so rural; for my part, I can't see what pleasure pretty misses can take in galloping to plays, and to balls, and such expensive vagaries; there is ten times more pastime in fetching walks in the fields, in plucking of daisies—

Miss Lin. Haymaking, feeding the poultry, and milking the cows?

Flint. Right, miss.

Miss Lin. It must be owned they are pretty employments for ladies.

Flint. Yes; for my mother used to say, who, between ourselves, was a notable housewife,

Your folks that are idle,
May live to bite the bridle.

Miss Flint. What a happiness to have been bred under so prudent a parent!

Flint. Ay, miss, you will have reason to say so; her maxims have put many a pound into my pocket.

Miss Lin. How does that concern me?

Flint. Because why, as the saying is,

Though I was the maker,
You may be the partaker.

Miss Lin. Sir, you are very obliging.

Flint. I can tell you, such offers are not every day to be met with; only think, miss, to have victuals and drink constantly found you, without cost or care on your side; especially, now, meat is so dear.

Miss Lin. Considerations by no means to be slighted.

Flint. Moreover, that you may live, and appear like my wife, I fully intend to keep you a coach.

Miss Lin. Indeed!

Flint. Yes; and you shall command the horses whenever you please, unless during the harvest, and when they are employed in ploughing and carting; because the main chance must be minded, you know.

Miss Lin. True, true.

Flint. Though I don't think, you will be vastly fond of coaching about; for why, we are off of the turnpike, and the roads are deadly deep about we.

Miss Lin. What, you intend to reside in the country?

Flint. Without doubt; for then, Miss, I shall be sure to have you all to myself.

Miss Lin. An affectionate motive—but even in this happy state, where the most perfect union prevails, some solitary hours will intrude, and the time, now and then, hang heavy on our hands.

Flint. What, in the country, my dear miss? not a minute—you will find all pastime and jollity there; for what with minding the dairy, dunning the tenants, preserving and pickling, nursing the children, scolding the servants, mending and making, roasting, boiling, and baking, you won't have a moment to spare; you will be merry and happy as the days are long.

Miss Lin. I am afraid the days will be hardly long enough to execute so extensive a plan of enjoyment.

Flint. Never you fear! I am told, miss, that you write an exceeding good hand.

Miss Lin. Pretty well, I believe.

Flint. Then, miss, there is more pleasure in store; for you may employ any leisure time that you have in being my clerk, as a justice of peace—you shall share sixpence out of every warrant, to buy any little thing that you want.

Miss Lin. That's finely imagined! As your enjoyments are chiefly domestic, I presume you have contrived to make home as convenient as can be; you have, sir, good gardens, no doubt?

Flint. Gardens! ay, ay; why, before the great parlour window there grows a couple of yews, as tall as a mast, and as thick as a steeple; and the boughs cast so delightful a shade, that you can't see your hand in any part of the room.

Miss Lin. A most delicate gloom!

Flint. And then there constantly roosts in the trees, a curious couple of owls, which I won't suffer our folks to disturb, as they make so rural a noise in the night——

Miss Lin. A most charming duet!

Flint. And besides, miss, they pay for their lodgings, as they are counted very good mousers you know.

Miss Lin. True; but within doors, your mansion is capacious, and——

Flint. Capacious! yes, yes, capacious enough; you may stretch your legs without crossing the threshold; why, we go up and down stairs into every room of the house—to be sure, at present,

it is a little out of repair; not that it rains in, where the casements are whole, at above five or six places at present.

Miss Lin. Your prospects are pleasing?

Flint. From off the top of the leads; for why, I have boarded up most of the windows, in order to save paying the tax; but, to my thinking, our bed-chamber, miss, is the most pleasantest place in the house.

Miss Lin. Oh, sir, you are very polite.

Flint. No, miss, it is not for that; but you must know, that there is a large bow window facing the east, that does finely for drying of herbs; it is hung round with hatchments of all the folks that have died in the family; and then the pigeon-house is over our heads.

Miss Lin. The pigeon-house!

Flint. Yes; and there, every morning, we shall be waked by day-break, with their murmuring, cooing, and courting, that will make it as fine as can be.

Miss Lin. Ravishing! Well, sir, it must be confessed, you have given me a most bewitching picture of pastoral life; your place is a perfect Arcadia—but I am afraid half the charms are derived from the painter's flattering pencil.

Flint. Not heightened a bit, as yourself shall be judge—and then, as to the company, miss, you may have plenty of that when you will, for we have as pretty a neighbourhood as a body can wish.

Miss Lin. Really?

Flint. There is the widow Kilderkin, that keeps the Adam and Eve at the end of the town, quite an agreeable body, indeed—the death of her husband has drove the poor woman to tipple a bit—Farmer Dobbins' daughters, and doctor Surplice, our curate, and wife, a vast conversable woman, if she was not altogether so deaf.

Miss Lin. A very sociable set!—why, sir, placed in this paradise, there is nothing left you to wish.

Flint. Yes, miss, but there is——

Miss Lin. Ay? what can that be?

Flint. The very same that our grandfather had—to have a beautiful Eve by my side—Could I lead the lovely Linnet, nothing loath, to that bower——

Miss Lin. Oh, excess of gallantry!

Flint. Would her sweet breath but deign to kindle, and blow up my hopes!

Miss Lin. Oh, Mr Flint! I must not suffer this, for your sake; a person of your importance and rank——

Flint. A young miss of your great merit and beauty——

Miss Lin. A gentleman so accomplished and rich——

Flint. Whose perfections are not only the talk of Bath, but of Bristol, and the whole country round.

Mrs Lin. Oh, Mr Flint, this is too——

Flint. Her goodness, her grace, her duty, her decency, her wisdom, and wit; her shape, slimness, and size, with her lovely black eyes; so elegant, engaging, so modest, so prudent, so pious; and, if I am rightly informed, possessed of a sweet pretty pipe.

Miss Lin. This is such a profusion——

Flint. Permit me, miss, to solicit a specimen of your delicate talents.

Miss Lin. Why, sir, as your extravagant compliments have left me nothing to say, I think the best thing I can do is to sing.

SONG.

The smiling morn, the breathing spring,
Invite the tuneful birds to sing;
And, as they warble from each spray,
Love melts the universal lay, &c.

Flint. Enchanting! ravishing sounds! not the nine Muses themselves, nor Mrs Baddeley, is equal to you.

Miss Lin. Oh, fie!

Flint. May I flatter myself, that the words of that song were directed to me?

Miss Lin. Should I make such a confession, I should ill deserve the character you have been pleased to bestow.

Enter LADY CATHARINE COLDSTREAM.

Lady Cath. Come, come, Maister Flint, I'll set your heart at rest in an instant—you ken well enow, lasses are apt to be modest and shy; then take her answer fra me—prepare the minister, and aw the rest of the tackle, and you will find us ready to gang to the kirk.

Flint. Miss, may I rely on what her ladyship says?

Lady Cath. Gad's mercy! I think the man is bewitched! he wonna take a woman of quality's word for sik a trifling thing as a wife!

Flint. Your ladyship will impute it all to my fears——then I will strait set about getting the needful.

Lady Cath. Gang your gait as fast as you list.

Flint. Lord bless us! I had like to have forgot—I have, please your ladyship, put up here in a purse, a few presents, that, if miss would deign to accept——

Lady Cath. Ah! that's aw right, quite in the order of things; as matters now stand, there is no harm in her accepting presents fra you, master Flint; you may produce.

Flint. Here is a Porto Bello pocket-piece of Admiral Vernon, with his image a one side, and six men of war, all in full sail, on the other——

Lady Cath. That's a curious medallion.

Flint. And here is half a crown of queen Anne's, as fresh as when it came from the mint—

Lady Cath. Yes, yes, it is in very fine preservation.

Flint. In this here paper, there are two mourning rings; that, which my aunt Bother'em left me, might serve very well, I should think, for the approaching happy occasion.

Lady Cath. How! a mourning——

Flint. Because why, the motto's so pat;

'True till death shall stop my breath.'

Lady Cath. Ay, ay, that contains mickle morality, miss.

Flint. And here is, fourthly, a silver coral and bells, with only a bit broke off the coral when I was cutting my grinders. This was given me by my godfather Slingsby, and I hope will be in use again before the year comes about.

Lady Cath. Na doubt, na doubt; leave that matter to us—I warrant we impede the Flint family from fawing into oblivion.

Flint. I hope so—I should be glad to have a son of my own, if so be, but to leave him my fortune; because why, at present, there is no mortal that I care a farthing about.

Lady Cath. Quite a philosopher!——then dispatch, master Flint, dispatch; for you ken, at your time of life, you hanna a moment to lose.

Flint. True, true; your ladyship's entirely devoted—Miss, I am your most affectionate slave.

[*Exit.*

Lady Cath. A saucy lad, this Master Flint; you see, miss, he has a meaning in aw that he does.

Miss Lin. Might I be permitted to alter your ladyship's words, I should rather say, meanness.

Lady Cath. It is na mickle matter what the mon is at present; wi' a little management, you may mold him into any form that you list.

Miss Lin. I am afraid he is not made of such pliant materials; but, however, I have too far advanced to retire; the die is cast—I have no chance now, unless my Corydon should happen to alter his mind——

Lady Cath. Na, miss; there is na danger in that; you ken the treaty is concluded under my mediation; an he should dare to draw back, lady Catharine Coldstream would soon find means to punish his perfidy——Come away, miss.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—SIR CHRISTOPHER CRIPPLE, SOUR CROUT, DE JARSEY, MAJOR RACKET, *and* POULTICE, *discovered sitting at a table.*

Sir Chr. WE must take care, that Flint does not surprise us, for the scoundrel is very suspicious.

Rac. There is no danger of that—I lodged him safely at Linnet's—Button stands centry at the end of the street, so that we shall be instantly apprised of every motion he makes.

Poul. Well managed, my Major!

Sir Chr. Yes, yes; the cunning young dog knows very well what he is about.

Sour Crout. Upon my word, Major Racket has very fine disposition to make a figure at de head of de army; five or six German campaigns will—ah, dat is de best school in de vorld for make de var.

Sir Chr. Five or six German campaigns!

Sour Crout. Ay, Chevalier; vat you say to dat?

Sir Chr. O Mynheer! nothing at all——a German war, for ought I know, may be a very good school, but it's a damned expensive education for us.

De Jar. C'est vrai, Chevalier, dat is all true, cet pay la dal place is the grave for the Frenchman and de fine English guinea.

Sir Chr. True, Monsieur; but our guineas are rather worse off than your men, for they stand no chance of rising again.

De Jar. Ha, ha, ha! dat is very well——le Chevalier have beaucoup d'esprit, great deal of wit, ma foi.

Rac. I think the knight is in luck—but don't let us lose sight of our subject. You, gentlemen, are all prepared, perfect in the several parts you are to play?

All. Ay, ay.

Rac. You, Mynheer Sour Crout?

Sour Crout. I understand—I will pique his honour—the pride of his famille.

Rac. Right; Poultice——

Poul. I will alarm him on the side of his health.

Sir Chr. Next to his money, the thing in the world he most minds.

Rac. You, De Jarsey, and Button, will employ all your eloquence on the prudential side of the—Oh, dear Jarsey! here is a draft for the pipe of port that I promised.

De Jar. Dat is right.

Rac. The only receipt to get bawds, boroughs, or Frenchmen. [*Aside.*]—Oh, here Billy comes—

Enter BUTTON.

Well, Billy, what news?

But. I am vast afraid all matters are concluded at last.

Rac. Ay! prithee, why so?

But. Because why, in ten minutes after you went, out bolted the squire, and hurry scurried away to lawyer Lattitat's, who, you know, serves his tenants, and does all his concerns.

Rac. True; well—

But. I suppose to give him orders about drawing the writings.

Sir Chr. Not unlikely—but you think Flint will come to the club?

But. There is no manner of doubt; because why, he hallooed to me, from over the way—what, Billy, I suppose you are bound to the Bear? well, boy, I shall be hard at your heels—and he seemed in prodigious vast spirits.

Rac. I am mistaken if we don't lower them a little. Well, gentlemen, the time of action draws nigh. Knight, we must decamp.

Sir Chr. When you will.

Rac. I think, sir Christopher, you lodge in the same house with the Linnets?

Sis Chr. Just over their heads.

Rac. Then thither we'll go—ten to one, if our plot operates as I expect, the hero will return to their house.

Sir Chr. Most likely.

Rac. We are come to a crisis, and the catastrophe of our piece can't be very far off.

Sir Chr. I wish, like other plays, it don't end in a marriage.

Rac. Then I shall be most confoundedly bit—but come, knight.

Sir Chr. Rot you, I do, as fast as I can——I can't think, Racket, what the deuce makes thee so warm in this business; there is certainly something at bottom, that I don't comprehend.—But, do, Major, have pity on the poor girl; upon my soul she is a sweet little syren, so innocent and———

Rac. Pooh, pooh; don't be absurd. I thought that matter had been fully explained; this, knight, is no time to look back. But suppose now I should have a little mischief in hand?

Sir Chr. How! of what kind?

Rac. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest knight, till done, and then applaud the deed.

Sir Chr. It is very extraordinary, Major Racket, if you are determined to make the devil a visit, that you can't pay it alone; or if you must have company, what a pox makes you think of fixing on me?

Rac. Hey day! ha, ha! What, in the vapours again?—we must have some more punch.

Sir Chr. You are mistaken; that won't have power to change the state of my mind; my resolves are too firm.

Rac. And who wishes to break them? I only ask your assistance to-night; and your reformation, you recollect, don't begin 'till to morrow.

Sir Chr. That's true, indeed; but no human power shall prevail to put it off any longer than to-morrow.

Rac. Or the next day at farthest.

Sir Chr. May I be———if I do.

[*Exeunt* RACKET *and* SIR CHRISTOPHER.

Poul. Come, lads, light your pipes—which of us shall be first to attack? Billy?

But. Won't it be rather too bold for me to begin?

Poul. Then let us leave it to chance—Hush! I hear him lumbering in—compose your looks; let his reception be solemn and grave.

But. Leave that chair for him.

Enter FLINT.

Flint. How fares it, my lads? Well, boys, matters are settled at last—the little Kate has complied, and to morrow is fixed for the day.

Poul. You have settled it, then?

Flint. As firm as a rock.

Poul. So you can't retreat if you would?

Flint. Retreat! I have no such design.

Poul. You han't?

Flint. No, to be sure, you great fool! what the deuce would Poultice be at?

Poul. Nay then, neighbours, what we have been saying will just signify nothing.

Flint. Saying? why you have not heard—that is, nobody———

Poul. No, nothing very material—Only—but as the matter is carried so far———

Flint. So far! why I hope you have not found out any flaw—Kitty has not———

Poul. No, no, nothing of that—no, upon my word—I believe a very modest, prudent, good girl, neighbour.

All. No manner of doubt.

Flint. Well then—but what a plague is the meaning of this? You all sit as silent and glum—why can't you speak out, with a pox?

Poul. Why, Squire, as we are all your fixed friends, we have been canvassing this matter among us.

Flint. You have?

Poul. Marriage, you know very well, is no trifling affair; too much caution and care can't be used.

Flint. That I firmly believe, which has made me defer it so long.

Poul. Pray lend me your hand; how is the state of your health? do you find yourself hearty and strong?

Flint. I think so; that is I—you han't observed any bad symptoms of late?

Poul. No; but you used to have pains flying about you.

Flint. Formerly; but since I have fixed my gout to a fit they are gone——that, indeed, lays me up four or five months in a year.

Poul. A pretty long spell; and in such a case, do you think now, that a marriage—

Flint. The most best receipt in the world—why that, man, was one of my motives—wives, you know, are allowed to make very good nurses.

Poul. That indeed.

Flint. Ay, and then they are always at hand; and besides they don't cost one a farthing.

Poul. True, true; why, you look very jolly and fresh; does not he?

All. Exceedingly.

Poul. Yet he can't be less than—let me see—wasn't you under old Syntax at Wells?

Flint. He died the year I left school.

Poul. That must be a good forty year since.

Flint. Come sheep-shearing next.

Poul. Then, squire, you are hard upon sixty?

Flint. Not far away, Master Poultice.

Poul. And Miss Linnet sixteen! you are a bold man—not but that there are instances, indeed, where men have survived many years such disproportionate marriages as these.

Flint. Survived! why should they not?

Poul. But, then, their stamina must be prodigiously strong.

Flint. Stamina!

Poul. Let us see! Button, there was doctor Dotage, that married the Devonshire girl, he had a matter of——

But. No, no; he dropped off in six months.

Poul. True, true, I had forgot.

Flint. Lord have mercy!

But. Indeed, an old master of mine, sir Harry O'Tuff, is alive, and walks about to this day.

Flint. Hey!

Poul. But you forgot where sir Harry was born, and how soon his lady eloped!

But. In the honey moon; with captain Pike of the guards; I mind it full well.

Poul. That, indeed, alters the case.

Flint. Well, but, Billy, you are not serious in this? you don't think there is any danger of death?

But. As to the matter of death, the doctor knows better than I; because why, that lies in his way; but I shall never forget colonel Crazy, one of the best customers that ever I had; I never think of him without dropping a tear——

Flint. Why; what was the matter with him?

But. Married lady Barbary Bonnie, as it might be about midnight on Monday——

Flint. Well——

But. But never more saw the sweet face of the sun.

Flint. What! did he die?

But. Within an hour after throwing the stocking.

Flint. Good lord! that was dreadful indeed—Of what age might he be?

But. About your time of life.

Flint. That is vastly alarming. Lord bless me, Bill, I am all of a tremble!

But. Ay, truly, it behoves your honour to consider what you are about.

Flint. True.

But. Then what a world of money must go! running forwards and backwards to town, and jaunting to see all the fine sights in the place.—

Flint. I shan't take her to many of them; perhaps I may show her the parliament-house, and plays, and Boodle's, and bedlam, and my lord mayor, and the lions.

But. Then the vast heap of fine clothes you must make——

Flint. What occasion for that?

But. As you arn't known, there is no doing without; because why, every body passes there for what they appear.

Flint. Right, Billy; but I believe I have found out a way to do that pretty cheap.

But. Which way may be that?

Flint. You have seen the minister that's come down to tack us together?

But. I have—Is he a fine man in the pulpit?

Flint. He don't care much to meddle with that; but he is a prodigious patriot, and a great politician to boot.

But. Indeed!

Flint. And has left behind him, at Paris, a choice collection of curious rich clothes, which he has promised to sell me a pennorth.

Poul. Pooh, what Billy talks of are trifles to the evils you are to expect——to have a girl to break in upon your old ways! your afternoon's nap interrupted, and perhaps not suffered to take your pipe of a night!

Flint. No!

Poul. All your former friends forbidden your house—

Flint. The fewer come in, the less will go out: I shan't be sorry for that.

Poul. To make room for her own numerous clan—

Flint. Not a soul of them shall enter the door.

Poul. A brood of babes at your board, whose fathers she herself won't find it easy to name—

Flint. To prevent that, I'll lock her up in a room.

Poul. The King's-Bench will break open the door——

Flint. Then I'll turn her out of the house.

Poul. Then her debts will throw you into gaol——

Flint. Who told you so?

Poul. A dozen of proctors.

Flint. Then I will hang myself out of the way.

Poul. So she will become possessed of her jointure, and her creditors will foreclose your estate.

Flint. What a miserable poor toad is a husband, whose misfortunes not even death can relieve!

But. Think of that, squire, before it be too late!

Flint. Well, but, friends, neighbours, what the deuce can I do? Are you all of a mind?

De Jar. All, all; dere is no question at all: What! a garçon of your ancient famille to take up with a pauvre petite bourgeoise?

Flint. Does that never happen in France?

De Jar. Never, but when Monsieur le Baron is very great beggar, and le bourgeoise has damned deal de guinea.

Poul. That is none of our case.

Flint. No, no—Mynheer, do your people never make up such matches?

Sour Crout. Never, never—what, a German dishonour his stock! why, Mester Flint, should Mistress Linnet bring you de children for de ten generations to come, they could not be chose de canons of Strasburgh.

Flint. No?

Poul. So, squire, take it which way you will, what dreadful danger you run!

Flint. I do.

Poul. Loss of friends——

But. Pipe and afternoon's nap—

Sour Crout. Your famille gone to de dogs—

De Jar. Your peace of mind to de devil—

Poul. Your health—

But. Your wealth—

Poul. Plate, money, and manors—

All. Your—

Flint. Enough, dear neighbours, enough—I feel it, I feel it too well. Lord have mercy, what a miserable scrape am I in! and here, too, not an hour ago, it has cost me, the Lord knows what, in making her presents!

Poul. Never mind that; you had better part with half you are worth in the world.

Flint. True, true—well, then, I'll go and break off all matters this minute.

Poul. The wisest thing you can do.

But. The sooner the better.

Flint. No doubt, no doubt, in the—and yet Button, she is a vast pretty girl—I should be heartily sorry to lose her—dost think one could not get her on easier terms than on marriage?

But. It is but trying, however.

Flint. To tell truth, Billy, I have always had that in my head; and, at all events, I have thought of a project that will answer my purpose.

But. Ay, squire, what is it?

Flint. No matter—and, do you hear, Billy? should I get her consent, if you will take her off my hands, and marry her, when I begin to grow tired, I'll settle ten pounds a-year upon you, for both your lives.

But. Without paying the taxes?

Flint. That matter we will talk of hereafter. [*Exit.*

Poul. So, so, we have well settled this business, however.

But. No more thoughts of his taking a wife.

Poul. He would sooner be tied to a gibbet; but, Billy, step after him, they will let you in at Sir Christopher Cripple's; and bring us, Bill, a faithful account.

But. I will, I will: but where shall you be?

Poul. Above, in the Phœnix; we won't stir out of the house; but be very exact.

But. Never fear. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter MISS LINNET.

Miss Lin. Heigh ho! what a sacrifice am I going to make! but it is the will of those who have a right to all my obedience, and to that I will submit. [*Loud knocking at the door.*] Bless me! who can that be at this time of night! Our friends may err; and projects, the most prudentially pointed, may miss of their aim; but age and experience demand respect and attention, and the undoubted kindness of our parents' designs claims, on our parts at least, a grateful and ready compliance.

Enter NANCY.

Miss Lin. Nancy, who was that at the door?

Nan. Mr Flint, miss, begs the favour of speaking five words with you.

Miss Lin. I was in hopes to have had this night, at least, to myself—Where is my mother?

Nan. In the next room with lady Catharine, consulting about your clothes for the morning.

Miss Lin. He is here—very well, you may go. [*Exit.*

Enter FLINT.

Flint. She is alone, as I wished—Miss, I beg pardon for intruding at this time of night, but—

Miss Lin. Sir!

Flint. You can't wonder that I desire to enjoy your good company every minute I can.

Miss Lin. Those minutes, a short space will place, Mr Flint, in your power; if, till then, you had permitted me to——

Flint. Right. But, to say the truth, I wanted to have a little serious talk with you of how and about it. I think, miss, you agree, if we marry, to go off to the country directly?

Miss Lin. If we marry! Is it, then, a matter of doubt?

Flint. Why, I tell you, miss; with regard to myself, you know, I am one of the most ancientest families in all the country round——

Miss Lin. Without doubt.

Flint. And, as to money and lands in these parts, I believe few people can match me.

Miss Lin. Perhaps not.

Flint. And as to yourself—I don't speak in a disparaging way—your friends are low folks, and your fortune just nothing.

Miss Lin. True, sir; but this is no new discovery; you have known this——

Flint. Hear me out now!—as I bring all these good things on my side, and you have nothing to give me in return but your love, I ought to be pretty sure of the possession of that.

Miss Lin. I hope, the properly discharging all the duties of that condition, which I am shortly to owe to your favour, will give you convincing proofs of my gratitude.

Flint. Your gratitude, miss!—but we talk of your love! and of that, if I marry, I must have plain and positive proofs.

Miss Lin. Proofs! of what kind?

Flint. To steal away directly with me to my lodgings.

Miss Lin. Your lodgings!

Flint. There pass the night, and in the morning, the very minute we rise, we will march away to the abbey.

Miss Lin. Sir!

Flint. In short, miss, I must have this token of love, or not a syllable more of the marriage.

Miss Lin. Give me patience!

Flint. Come, miss, we have not a minute to lose; the coast is clear—should somebody come, you will put it out of my power to do what I design.

Miss Lin. Power! Hands off, Mr Flint! Power! I promise you, sir, you shall never have me in your power.

Flint. Here, miss———

Miss Lin. Despicable wretch! from what part of my character could your vanity derive a hope, that I would submit to your infamous purpose?

Flint. Don't be in a———

Miss Lin. To put principle out of the question, not a creature, that had the least tincture of pride, could fall a victim to such a contemptible—

Flint. Why, but, miss——

Miss Lin. It is true, in compliance with the earnest request of my friends, I had consented to sacrifice my peace to their pleasure; and, though reluctant, would have given you my hand.

Flint. Vastly well!

Miss Lin. What motive, but obedience to them, could I have had in forming an union with you? Did you presume I was struck with your personal merit, or think the sordidness of your mind and manners would tempt me?

Flint. Really, miss, this is carrying——

Miss Lin. You have wealth, I confess; but where could have been the advantage to me, as a reward for becoming your drudge? I might, perhaps, have received a scanty subsistence, for I can hardly suppose you would grant the free use of that to your wife, which your meanness has denied to yourself.

Flint. So, so, so!—by and by she will alarm the whole house!

Miss Lin. The whole house! the whole town shall be told. Sure the greatest misfortune, that poverty brings in its train, is the subjecting us to the insults of wretches like this, who have no other merit but what their riches bestow on them.

Flint. What a damnable vixen! [*Aside.*

Miss Lin. Go, sir! leave the house! I am ashamed, sir, you have had the power to move me; and never more let me be shocked with your sight.

Enter LADY CATHARINE *and* MRS LINNET.

Lady Cath. How's aw wi you within?—Gad's mercy! what's the matter wi miss? I will hope, Maister Flint, it is na you, wha ha set her a wailing?

Mrs Lin. Kitty, my love!

Miss Lin. A modest proposal of that gentleman's making———

Lady Cath. Of what kind?

Miss Lin. Only this moment to quit my father and you, and take up my lodging with him.

Lady Cath. To night! aw, that is quite out of the order of things; that is ne'er done, Maister Flint, till after the ceremony of the nuptials is said.

Flint. No? Then, I can tell your ladyship, it will never be done.

Lady Cath. How?

Enter MAJOR RACKET, SIR CHRISTOPHER CRIPPLE, *and* BUTTON.

Sir Chris. We beg pardon for taking the liberty to come in, Mrs Linnet, but we were afraid some accident might have happened to miss—

Mrs Lin. There has, sir.

Rac. Of what kind?

Mrs Lin. That worthy gentleman, under pretence of friendship to us, and honourable views to my daughter, has hatched a treacherous design to inevitably ruin my child!

Sir Chris. What, he? Flint?

Mrs Lin. Even he.

Sir Chris. An impudent son of a——Billy, lend me up, that I may take a peep at the puppy—Your servant, young gentleman! what, is it true that we hear? A sweet swain this, to tempt a virgin to sin! Why, Old Nick has made a mistake here; he used to be more expert in his angling; for what female on earth can be got to catch this bait?

Lady Cath. Haud, haud you, sir Christopher Cripple, let Maister Flint and I have a short conference upon this occasion—I find, Maister Flint, you ha made a little mistake, but marriage will set aw matters right in the instant. I suppose you persevere to gang wi miss to kirk in the morning?

Flint. No, madam, nor the evening neither.

Lady Cath. Mercy a Gad! what, do you refuse to ratify the preliminaries?

Flint. I don't say that neither.

Sir Chris. Then name the time in which you will fulfil them—a week?

Lady Cath. A fortnight?

Mrs Lin. A month?

Flint. I won't be bound to no time.

Rac. A rascally evasion of his, to avoid an action at law.

Sir Chris. But, perhaps, he may be disappointed in that.

Lady Cath. Well; but, Maister Flint, are you willing to make miss a pecuniary acknowledgment for the damage?

Flint. I have done her no damage, and I'll make no reparation.

Rac. Twelve honest men of your country may happen to differ in judgment.

Flint. Let her try, if she will.

Sir Chris. And, I promise you, she shan't be to seek for the means.

Lady Cath. If you be nae afraid of the laws, ha you nae sense of shame?

Rac. He sense of shame!

Lady Cath. Gad's wull! it shall cum to the proof; you mun ken, good folk, at Edinburgh, last winter, I got acquainted with Maister Fout the play-actor—I will get him to bring the filthy loon on the stage—

Sir Chris. And expose him to the contempt of the world? he richly deserves it.

Flint. Ay, he may write, you may rail, and the people may hiss, and what care I? I have that at home, that will keep up my spirits.

Lady Cath. At hame?

Rac. The wretch means his money.

Flint. And what better friend can any man have? Tell me the place where its influence fails? Ask that gentleman how he got his cockade? Money! I know its worth; and, therefore, can't too carefully keep it. At this very instant, I have a proof of its value; it enables me to laugh at that squeamish impertinent girl, and despise the weak efforts of your impotent malice—Call me forth to your courts when you please, that will procure me able defenders, and good witnesses, too, if they are wanted. [*Exit.*

Sir Chris. Now, there's a fellow that will never reform.

Rac. You had better let him alone; it is in vain to expect justice or honour from him! What a most contemptible cur is a miser!

Sir Chris. Ten thousand times worse than a highwayman; that poor devil only pilfers from Peter or Paul, and the money is scattered as soon as received; but the wretch, that accumulates for the sake of secreting, annihilates what was intended for the use of the world, and is a robber of the whole human race.

Rac. And of himself, too, into the bargain.

But. For all the world; like a magpye, he steals for the mere pleasure of hiding.

Rac. Well observed, little Bill!

But. Why, he wanted to bring me into his plot—yes; he made proposals for me to marry miss, after his purpose was served!

Sir Chris. How!

But. But he was out in his man—let him give his cast clothes to his coachman. Billy Button can afford a new suit of his own.

Rac. I don't doubt it at all.

But. Fellow—I am almost resolved never to set another stitch for him as long as I live.

Sir Chris. Right, Button, right; but where is Miss Kitty? Come hither, my chicken: Faith, I am heartily glad you are rid of this scoundrel; and, if such a crippled old fellow as me was worthy of your notice—but hold, Kate, there is another chap I must guard you against———

Miss Lin. Another, sir! Who?

Sir Chris. Why, this gentleman.

Rac. Me!

Sir Chris. Ay, you; come, come, major, don't think you can impose upon a cunning old sportsman like me.

Rac. Upon my soul, sir Christopher, you make me blush.

Sir Chris. Oh! you are devilish modest, I know—but to come to the trial at once. I have some reason to believe, major, you are fond of this girl; and, that her want of fortune mayn't plead your excuse, I don't think I can better begin my plan of reforming, than by a compliment paid to her virtue—then take her, and, with her, two thousand guineas in hand.

Mrs Lin. How, sir!

Sir Chris. And expect another good spell when Monsieur le Fevre sets me free from the gout.

But. Please your worship, I'll accept her with half———

Lady Cath. Gi me leave, sir Christopher, to throw in the widow's mite on the happy occasion; the bride garment, and her dinner shall be furnished by me.

Sir Chris. Cock-a-leeky soup?

Lady Cath. Sheep's head singed, and a haggies in plenty.

Sir Chris. Well said, lady Catharine!

Miss Lin. How, sir, shall I acknowledge this goodness?

Sir Chris. By saying nothing about it—Well, sir, we wait your answer.

Rac. I think the lady might first be consulted; I should be sorry a fresh persecution should follow so fast on the heels of the———

Sir Chris. Come, come, no trifling; your resolution at once.

Rac. I receive, then, your offer with pleasure.

Sir Chris. Miss?

Miss Lin. Sir, there is a little account to be first settled between this gentleman and an old unhappy acquaintance of mine.

Sir Chris. Who?

Miss Lin. The major can guess—the unhappy Miss Prim.

Sir Chris. You see, major, your old sins are rising in judgment.

Rac. I believe, madam, I can satisfy that.

Miss Lin. I shan't give you the trouble—but, first, let me return you all my most grateful thanks for your kind intentions towards me. I know your generous motives, and feel their value, I hope, as I ought; but might I be permitted to chuse, I beg to remain in the station I am; my little talents have hitherto received the public protection; nor, whilst I continue to deserve, am I the least afraid of losing my patrons. [*Exeunt.*

THE

IRISH WIDOW.

BY

GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMAN.
WHITTLE, *a dotard, in love with the Widow.*	WIDOW BRADY, *the Irish Widow.*
KECKSEY, *his friend.*	
THOMAS, *servant to* WHITTLE.	
BATES, *a civil old bachelor.*	
SIR PATRICK O'NEAL, *father to the Widow.*	
NEPHEW, *in love with the Widow.*	

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—WHITTLE'S *house.*

Enter BATES *and Servant.*

Bates. Is he gone out? his card tells me to come directly—I did but lock up some papers, take my hat and cane, and away I hurried.

Ser. My master desires you will sit down, he will return immediately; he had some business with his lawyer, and went out in great haste, leaving the message I have delivered. Here is my young master. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter NEPHEW.

Bates. What, lively Billy!—hold, I beg your pardon—melancholy William, I think—Here's a fine revolution—I hear your uncle, who was last month all gravity, and you all mirth, have changed characters; he is now all spirit, and you are in the dumps, young man.

Neph. And for the same reason. This journey to Scarborough will unfold the riddle.

Bates. Come, come, in plain English, and before your uncle comes, explain the matter.

Neph. In the first place, I am undone.

Bates. In love, I know—I hope your uncle is not undone, too—that would be the devil!

Neph. He has taken possession of him in every sense. In short, he came to Scarborough to see the lady I had fallen in love with——

Bates. And fell in love himself?

Neph. Yes, and with the same lady.

Bates. That is the devil indeed!

Neph. O, Mr Bates! when I thought my happiness complete, and wanted only my uncle's consent, to give me the independence he so often has promised me, he came to Scarborough for that purpose, and wished me joy of my choice; but, in less than a week, his approbation turned into a passion for her: he now hates the sight of

me, and is resolved, with the consent of the father, to make her his wife directly.

Bates. So he keeps you out of your fortune, won't give his consent, which his brother's foolish will requires, and he would marry himself the same woman, because right, title, conscience, nature, justice, and every law, divine and human, are against it!

Neph. Thus he tricks me at once both of wife and fortune, without the least want of either.

Bates. Well said, friend Whittle! but it can't be, it shan't be, and it must not be!—this is murder and robbery in the strongest sense, and he shan't be hanged in chains, to be laughed at by the whole town, if I can help it.

Neph. I am distracted, the widow is distressed, and we both shall run mad!

Bates. A widow too! 'gad a mercy, threescore and five!

Neph. But such a widow! She is now in town with her father, who wants to get her off his hands; 'tis equal to him who has her, so she is provided for—I hear somebody coming—I must away to her lodgings, where she waits for me to execute a scheme directly for our delivery.

Bates. What is her name, Billy?

Neph. Brady.

Bates. Brady! Is not she daughter to sir Patrick O'Neale!

Neph. The same. She was sacrificed to the most senseless drunken profligate in the whole country: He lived to run out his fortune; and the only advantage she got from the union was, he broke that and his neck before he had broke her heart.

Bates. The affair of marriage is, in this country, put upon the easiest footing; there is neither love or hate in the matter; necessity brings them together; they are united at first for their mutual convenience, and separated ever after for their particular pleasures—O rare matrimony!—— Where does she lodge?

Neph. In Pall Mall, near the hotel.

Bates. I'll call in my way, and assist at the consultation; I am for a bold stroke, if gentle methods should fail.

Neph. We have a plan, and a spirited one, if my sweet widow is able to go through it—pray let us have your friendly assistance—ours is the cause of love and reason.

Bates. Get you gone, with your love and reason! they seldom pull together now-a-days. I'll give your uncle a dose first, and then I'll meet you at the widow's—What says your uncle's privy counsellor, Mr Thomas, to this?

Neph. He is greatly our friend, and will enter sincerely into our service—he is honest, sensible, ignorant, and particular; a kind of half coxcomb, with a thorough good heart—but he's here.

Bates. Do you go about your business, and leave the rest to me.

[*Exit* NEPHEW.

Enter THOMAS.

Bates. Mr Thomas, I am glad to see you; upon my word, you look charmingly—you wear well, Mr Thomas.

Tho. Which is a wonder, considering how times go, Mr Bates—they'll wear and tear me too, if I don't take care of myself—my old master has taken the nearest way to wear himself out, and all that belong to him.

Bates. Why, surely this strange story about town is not true, that the old gentleman is fallen in love?

Tho. Ten times worse than that!

Bates. The devil!

Tho. And his horns—going to be married!

Bates. Not if I can help it.

Tho. You never saw such an altered man in your born days!—he's grown young again; he frisks, and prances, and runs about, as if he had a new pair of legs—he has left off his brown camlet surtout, which he wore all the summer, and now, with his hat under his arm, he goes open breasted, and he dresses, and powders, and smirks, so that you would take him for the mad Frenchman in Bedlam—something wrong in his upper story----Would you think it?—he wants me to wear a pig-tail!

Bates. Then he is far gone indeed!

Tho. As sure as you are there, Mr Bates, a pig-tail!—we have had sad work about it—I made a compromise with him to wear these ruffled shirts which he gave me; but they stand in my way-----I am so listless with them—— though I have tied up my hands for him, I won't tie up my head, that I am resolute.

Bates. This it is to be in love, Thomas?

Tho. He may make free with himself, he shan't make a fool of me----he has got his head into a bag, but I won't have a pig-tail tacked to mine—-and so I told him.

Bates. What did you tell him?

Tho. That as I, and my father, and his father before me, had wore their own hair as heaven had sent it, I thought myself rather too old to set up for a monkey at my time of life, and wear a pig-tail—he, he, he!—he took it.

Bates. With a wry face, for it was wormwood.

Tho. Yes, he was frumped, and called me old blockhead, and would not speak to me the rest of the day—but the next day he was at it again —he then put me into a passion—and I could not help telling him, that I was an Englishman born, and had my prerogative as well as he; and that as long as I had breath in my body I was for liberty, and a strait head of hair!

Bates. Well said, Thomas!—he could not answer that.

Tho. The poorest man in England is a match for the greatest, if he will but stick to the laws of the land, and the statute books, as

they are delivered down to us from our forefathers.

Bates. You are right—we must lay our wits together, and drive the widow out of your old master's head, and put her into your young master's hands.

Tho. With all my heart!—nothing can be more meritorious—marry at his years! what a terrible account would he make of it, Mr Bates!—Let me see—on the debtor side sixty-five—and per contra creditor, a buxom widow of twenty-three—He'll be a bankrupt in a fortnight—he, he, he!

Bates. And so he would, Mr Thomas—what have you got in your hand?

Tho. A pamphlet, my old gentleman takes in—he has left off buying histories and religious pieces by numbers, as he used to do; and since he has got this widow in his head, he reads nothing but the Amorous Repository, Cupid's Revels, Call to Marriage, Hymen's Delights, Love lies a Bleeding, Love in the Suds, and such like tender compositions.

Bates. Here he comes, with all his folly about him.

Tho. Yes, and the first fool from Vanity-fair—Heaven help us!—love turns man and woman topsy turvy! [*Exit* THOMAS.

Whit. [*Without.*] Where is he? where is my good friend?

Enter WHITTLE.

Ha! here he is—give me your hand.

Bates. I am glad to see you in such spirits, my old gentleman.

Whit. Not so old neither—no man ought to be called old, friend Bates, if he is in health, spirits, and———

Bates. In his senses—which I should rather doubt, as I never saw you half so frolicksome in my life.

Whit. Never too old to learn, friend; and if I don't make use of my philosophy now, I may wear it out in twenty years—I have been always bantered as of too grave a cast—you know, when I studied at Lincoln's Inn, they used to call me Young Wisdom.

Bates. And if they should call you Old Folly, it will be a much worse name.

Whit. No young jackanapes dares to call me so, while I have this friend at my side. [*Touches his sword.*]

Bates. A hero, too! what in the name of common sense is come to you, my friend?—high spirits, quick honour, a long sword, and a bag!—you want nothing but to be terribly in love, and then you may sally forth Knight of the Woeful Countenance. Ha, ha, ha!

Whit. Mr Bates—the ladies, who are the best judges of countenances, are not of your opinion; and unless you'll be a little serious, I must beg pardon for giving you this trouble, and I'll open my mind to some more attentive friend.

Bates. Well, come! unlock then, you wild, handsome, vigorous young dog you—I will please you if I can.

Whit. I believe you never saw me look better, Frank, did you?

Bates. O yes, rather better forty years ago.

Whit. What, when I was at Merchant Taylors' School?

Bates. At Lincoln's-Inn, Tom.

Whit. It can't be—I never disguise my age, and next February I shall be fifty-four.

Bates. Fifty-four! Why I am sixty, and you always licked me at school—though I believe I could do as much for you now, and 'ecod I believe you deserve it too.

Whit. I tell you I am in my fifty-fifth year.

Bates. O, you are?—let me see—we were together at Cambridge, anno domini twenty-five, which is near fifty years ago—you came to the college, indeed, surprisingly young; and, what is more surprising, by this calculation, you went to school before you was born—you was always a forward child.

Whit. I see there is no talking or consulting with you in this humour; and so, Mr Bates, when you are in temper to show less of your wit, and more of your friendship, I shall consult with you.

Bates. Fare you well, my old boy—young fellow, I mean—when you have done sowing your wild oats, and have been blistered into your right senses; when you have half killed yourself with being a beau, and return to your woollen caps, flannel waistcoats, worsted stockings, cork soles, and gallochies, I am at your service again. So bon jour to you, Monsieur Fifty-four—ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Whit. He has certainly heard of my affair—but he is old and peevish—he wants spirits, and strength of constitution to conceive my happiness—I am in love with the widow, and must have her: Every man knows his own wants—let the world laugh, and my friend stare! let them call me imprudent, and mad, if they please—I live in good times, and among people of fashion; so none of my neighbours, thank Heaven, can have the assurance to laugh at me.

Enter OLD KECKSEY.

Keck. What, my friend Whittle! joy, joy, to you, old boy—you are going, a going, a gone! a fine widow has bid for you, and will have you—hah, friend? all for the best—there is nothing like it—hugh, hugh, hugh!—a good wife is a good thing, and a young one is a better—hah—who's afraid? If I had not lately married one, I should have been at death's door by this time—hugh, hugh, hugh!

Whit. Thank, thank you, friend! I was coming to advise with you---I am got into the pound again---in love up to the ears---a fine woman, faith; and there's no love lost between us.---Am I right, friend?

Keck. Right! ay, right as my leg, Tom! Life's nothing without love---hugh, hugh! I am happy as the day's long! my wife loves gadding, and I can't stay at home; so we are both of a mind---She's every night at one or other of the garden places; but among friends, I am a little afraid of the damp; hugh, hugh, hugh! She has got an Irish gentleman, a kind of cousin of hers, to take care of her; a fine fellow! and so good-natured!---It is a vast comfort to have such a friend in a family! Hugh, hugh, hugh!

Whit. You are a bold man, cousin Keeksey.

Keck. Bold! ay, to be sure; none but the brave deserve the fair------Hugh, hugh! who's afraid?

Whit. Why your wife is five feet ten!

Keck. Without her shoes. I hate your little shrimps; none of your lean, meagre French frogs for me; I was always fond of the majestic: give me a slice of a good English surloin! cut and come again; hugh, hugh, hugh! that's my taste.

Whit. I'm glad you have so good a stomach---And so you would advise me to marry the widow directly?

Keck. To be sure!---you have not a moment to lose; I always mind what the poet says,

'Tis folly to lose time,
When man is in his prime:

Hugh! hugh! hugh!

Whit. You have an ugly cough, cousin.

Keck. Marriage is the best lozenge for it.

Whit. You have raised me from the dead---I am glad you came---Frank Bates had almost killed me with his jokes---but you have comforted me, and we will walk through the Park; and I will carry you to the widow in Pall-mall.

Keck. With all my heart!------I'll raise her spirits, and yours too. Courage, Tom---come along ------who's afraid? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.---*The* WIDOW'S *lodging.*

Enter WIDOW, NEPHEW, *and* BATES.

Bates. Indeed, madam, there is no other way but to cast off your real character, and assume a feigned one; it is an extraordinary occasion, and requires extraordinary measures; pluck up a spirit, and do it for the honour of your sex.

Neph. Only consider, my sweet widow, that our all is at stake.

Wid. Could I bring my heart to act contrary to its feelings, would not you hate me for being a hypocrite, though it is done for your sake?

Neph. Could I think myself capable of such ingratitude------

Wid. Don't make fine speeches! You men are strange creatures; you turn our heads to your purposes, and then despise us for the folly you teach us. 'Tis hard to assume a character contrary to my disposition: I cannot get rid of my unfashionable prejudices till I have been married in England some time, and lived among my betters.

Neph. Thou charming, adorable woman! what shall we do then? I never wished for a fortune till this moment.

Wid. Could we live upon affection, I would give your fortune to your uncle, and thank him for taking it; and then------

Neph. What then, my sweet widow?

Wid. I would desire you to run away with me as fast as you can---What a pity it is, that this money, which my heart despises, should hinder its happiness, or that, for want of a few dirty acres, a poor woman must be made miserable, and sacrificed twice to those who have them!

Neph. Heaven forbid! these exquisite sentiments endear you more to me, and distract me with the dread of losing you.

Bates. Young folks; let an old man, who is not quite in love, and yet will admire a fine woman to the day of his death, throw in a little advice among your flames and darts.

Wid. Though a woman, a widow, and in love too, I can bear reason, Mr Bates.

Bates. And that's a wonder------You have no time to lose; for want of a jointure you are still your father's slave; he is obstinate, and has promised you to the old man: Now, madam, if you will not rise superior to your sex's weakness, to secure a young fellow instead of an old one, your eyes are a couple of hypocrites.

Wid. They are a couple of traitors, I'm sure, and have led their mistress into a toil, from which all her wit cannot release her.

Neph. But it can, if you will but exert it. My uncle adored, and fell in love with you for your beauty, softness, and almost speechless reserve. Now, if, amidst all his rapturous ideas of your delicacy, you would bounce upon him a wild, ranting, buxom widow, he will grow sick of his bargain, and give me a fortune to take you off his hands.

Wid. I shall make a very bad actress.

Neph. You are an excellent mimic; assume but the character of your Irish female neighbour in the country, with which you astonished us so agreeably at Scarborough; you will frighten my uncle to terms, and do that for us which neither my love nor your virtue can accomplish without it.

Wid. Now for a trial---[*Mimicking a strong brogue.*]---Fait and trot, if you will be after bringing me before the old jontleman, if he loves music, I will trate his ears with a little of the

brogue, and some dancing too, into the bargain, if knees capering——O bless me! my heart fails me, and I am frightened out of my wits; I can never go through it.

[NEPHEW *and* BATES *both laugh.*——NEPHEW, *kneeling, and kissing her hand,*

O, 'tis admirable! Love himself inspires you, and we shall conquer. What say you, Mr Bates?

Bates. I'll insure you success; I can scarce believe my own ears: such a tongue and a brogue would make Hercules tremble at five-and-twenty! But away, away, and give him the first broadside in the Park; there you'll find him hobbling with that old cuckold, Kecksey.

Wid. But will my dress suit the character I play?

Neph. The very thing! Is your retinue ready, and your part got by heart?

Wid. All is ready; 'tis an act of despair to punish folly and reward merit; 'tis the last effort of pure, honourable love; and if every woman would exert the same spirit for the same out-of-fashion rarity, there would be less business for Doctors-Commons. Now let the critics laugh at me, if they dare. [*Exit with spirit.*

Neph. Bravo! bravissimo! sweet widow! [*Exit after her.*

Bates. Huzza! huzza! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*The Park.*

Enter WHITTLE *and* KECKSEY.

Whit. Yes, yes, she is Irish; but so modest, so mild, and so tender, and just enough of the accent to give a peculiar sweetness to her words, which drop from her in monosyllables, with such a delicate reserve, that I shall have all the comfort, without the impertinence of a wife.

Keck. There our taste differs, friend; I am for a lively smart girl in my house, hugh! hugh! to keep up my spirits, and make me merry. I don't admire dumb waiters, not I; no still life for me; I love the prittle prattle; it sets me to sleep, and I can take a sound nap, while my Sally and her cousin are running and playing about the house like young cats.

Whit. I am for no cats in my house; I cannot sleep with a noise; the widow was made on purpose for me; she is so bashful, has no acquaintance, and she never would stir out of doors, if her friends were not afraid of a consumption, and so force her into the air: Such a delicate creature! you shall see her; you were always for a tall, chattering, frisky wench; now, for my part, I am with the old saying,

Wife a mouse,
Quiet house;
Wife a cat,
Dreadful that!

Keck. I don't care for your sayings——who's afraid?

Whit. There goes Bates: let us avoid him, he will only be joking with us: when I have taken a serious thing into my head, I can't bear to have it laughed out again. This way, friend Kecksey—What have we got here?

Keck. [*Looking out.*] Some fine prancing wench, with her lovers and footmen about her; she's a gay one, by her motions.

Whit. Were she not so flaunting, I should take it for—No, it is impossible; and yet is not that my nephew with her? I forbad him speaking to her; it can't be the widow! I hope it is not.

Enter WIDOW, *followed by* NEPHEW, *three Footmen, and a black Boy.*

Wid. Don't bother me, young man, with your darts, your cupids, and your pangs; if you had half of them about you that you swear you have, they would have cured you, by killing you long ago. Would you have me faitless to your uncle, hah! young man? Was not I faitful to you, 'till I was ordered to be faitful to him? but I must know more of your English ways, and live more among the English ladies, to learn how to be faitful to two at a time—and so there's my answer for you.

Neph. Then I know my relief, for I cannot live without you. [*Exit.*

Wid. Take what relief you plase, young jontleman, what have I to do with dat? He is certainly mad, or out of his sinses, for he swears he can't live without me, and yet he talks of killing himself? how does he make out dat? if a countryman of mine had made such a blunder, they would have put it into all the newspapers, and Faulkner's Journal beside; but an Englishman may look over the hedge, while an Irishman must not stale a horse.

Keck. Is this the widow, friend Whittle?

Whit. I don't know; [*Sighing.*] it is, and it is not.

Wid. Your servant, Mr Whittol; I wish you would spake to your nephew not to be whining and dangling after me all day in his green coat, like a parrot: It is not for my reputation that he should follow me about like a beggar-man, and ask me for what I had given him long ago, but have since bestowed upon you, Mr Whittol.

Whit. He is an impudent beggar, and shall be really so for his disobedience.

Wid. As he can't live without me, you know, it will be charity to starve him: I wish the poor young man dead with all my heart, as he thinks it will do him a grate deal of good.

Keck. [*To* WHITTLE.] She is tender, indeed! and I think she has the brogue a little—hugh! hugh!

Whit. It is stronger to-day than ever I heard it. [*Staring.*

Wid. And are you now talking of my brogue? It is always the most fullest when the wind is aesterly; it has the same effect upon me as upon stammering people—they can't spake for their impediment, and my tongue is fixed so loose in my mouth, I can't stop it for the life of me.

Whit. What a terrible misfortune, friend Kecksey!

Keck. Not at all; the more tongue the better, say I.

Wid. When the wind changes, I have no brogue at all, at all. But come, Mr Whittol, don't let us be vulgar, and talk of our poor relations: It is impossible to be in this metropolis of London, and have any thought but of operas, plays, masquerades, and pantaons, to keep up one's spirits in the winter; and Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and Marybone fireworks, to cool and refresh one in the summer. La! la! la! [*Sings.*

Whit. I protest she puts me into a sweat! we shall have a mob about us.

Keck. The more the merrier, I say—who's afraid?

Wid. How the people stare! as if they never saw a woman's voice before; but my vivacity has got the better of my good manners. This, I suppose, this strange gentleman, is a near friend and relation? and, as such, notwithstanding his appearance, I shall always trate him, though I might dislike him upon a nearer acquaintance.

Keck. Madam, you do me honour! I like your frankness, and I like your person, and I envy my friend Whittle; and if you were not engaged, and I were not married, I would endeavour to make myself agreeable to you, that I would—— hugh! hugh!

Wid. And indeed, sir, it would be very agraable to me; for if I should hate you as much as I did my first dare husband, I should always have the comfort, that, in all human probability, my torments would not last long.

Keck. She utters something more than monosyllables, friend! this is better than bargain: she has a fine bold way of talking.

Whit. More bold than welcome! I am struck all of a heap!

Wid. What, are you low spirited, my dare Mr Whittol? When you were at Scarborough, and winning my affections, you were all mirth and griety; and now you have won me, you are as thoughtful about it as if we had been married some time!

Whit. Indeed, madam, I can't but say I am a little thoughtful! we take it by turns; you were very sorrowful a month ago for the loss of your husband; and that you could dry up your tears so soon naturally makes me a little thoughtful.

Wid. Indeed, I could dry up my tears for a dozen husbands when I was sure of having a tirteenth like Mr Whittol: that's very natural, sure, both in England and Dublin, too!

Keck. She won't die of a consumption; she has a fine full-toned voice, and you'll be very happy, Tom—Hugh! hugh!

Whit. O yes, very happy.

Wid. But come, don't let us be melancholy before the time: I am sure I have been moped up for a year and a half—I was obliged to mourn for my first husband, that I might be sure of a second; and my father kept my spirits in subjection, as the best receipt (he said) for changing a widow into a wife; but now I have my arms and legs at liberty, I must and will have my swing: Now, I am out of my cage, I could dance two nights together, and a day, too, like any singing bird; and I'm in such spirits, that I have got rid of my father, I could fly over the moon without wings, and back again, before dinner. Bless my eyes! and don't I see there Miss Nancy O'Flarty, and her brother captain O'Flarty? He was one of my dying Strephons at Scarborough. I have a very great regard for him, and must make him a little miserable with my happiness. [*Curtseys.*] Come along, Skips! [*To the servants.*] don't you be gostring there; show your liveries, and bow to your master that is to be, and to his friend, and hold up your heads, and trip after me as lightly as if you had no legs to your feet. I shall be with you again, jontlemen, in the crack of a fan—O, I'll have a husband, ay, marry!

[*Exit singing.*

Keck. A fine buxom widow, faith! no acquaintance—delicate reserve—mopes at home—forced into the air—inclined to a consumption—What a description you gave of your wife! Why, she beats my Sally, Tom!

Whit. Yes, and she'll beat me, if I don't take care. What a change is here! I must turn about, or this will turn my head. Dance for two nights together! and leap over the moon! you shall dance and leap by yourself, that I am resolved.

Keck. Here she comes again; it does my heart good to see her—You are in luck, Tom.

Whit. I would give a finger to be out of such luck.

Enter WIDOW, *&c.*

Wid. Ha, ha, ha! the poor captain is marched off in a fury: he can't bear to hear that the town has capitulated to you, Mr Whittol. I have promised to introduce him to you: he will make one of my danglers to take a little exercise with me, when you take your nap in the afternoon.

Whit. You shan't catch me napping, I assure you. What a discovery and escape I have made! I am in a sweat with the thought of my danger!

[*Aside.*

Keck. I protest, cousin, there goes my wife, and her friend Mr Mac Brawn. What a fine stately couple they are! I must after them, and have a laugh with them—now they giggle and walk quick, that I mayn't overtake them. Ma-

dam, your servant. You're a happy man, Tom! Keep up your spirits, old boy! Hugh! hugh!—who's afraid!

[*Exit.*

Wid. I know Mr Mac Brawn extremely well. He was very intimate at our house in my first husband's time; a great comfort he was to me, to be sure! He would very often leave his claret and companions for a little conversation with me: He was bred at the Dublin university;—and, being a very deep scholar, has fine talents for a tate a tate.

Whit. She knows him, too! I shall have my house over-run with the Mac Brawns, O'Shoulders, and the blood of the Backwells: Lord have mercy upon me!

Wid. Pray, Mr Whittol, is that poor spindle-legged crater of a cousin of yours lately married? ha, ha, ha! I don't pity the poor crater his wife, for that agreable cough of his will soon reward her for all her sufferings.

Whit. What a delivery! a reprieve before the knot was tied! [*Aside.*

Wid. Are you unwell, Mr Whittol? I should be sorry you would fall sick before the happy day. Your being in danger afterwards would be a great consolation to me, because I should have the pleasure of nursing you myself.

Whit. I hope never to give you that trouble, madam.

Wid. No trouble at all, at all! I assure you, sir, from my soul, that I shall take great delight in the occasion.

Whit. Indeed, madam, I believe it.

Wid. I don't care how soon; the sooner the better; and the more danger the more honour: I spake from my heart.

Whit. And so do I from mine, madam.

[*Sighs.*

Wid. But don't let us think of future pleasure, and neglect the present satisfaction. My mantua-maker is waiting for me to choose my clothes, in which I shall forget the sorrows of Mrs Brady in the joys of Mrs Whittol. Though I have no fortune myself, I shall bring a tolerable one to you, in debts, Mr Whittol; and which I will pay you tinfold in tinderness: Your deep purse, and my open heart, will make us the envy of the little grate ones, and the grate little ones; the people of quality, with no souls, and grate souls with no cash at all. I hope you'll meet me at the pantaon this evening. Lady Rantiton, and her daughter Miss Nettledown, and Nancy Tittup, with half a dozen Maccaronies, and two Savoury Vivers, are to take me there; and we propose a grate deal of chat and merriment, and dancing all night, and all other kind of recreations. I am quite another kind of a crater, now I am a bird in the fields: I can junket about a week together: I have a fine constitution, and am never molested with your nasty vapours. Are you ever troubled with vapours, Mr Whittol?

Whit. A little now and then, madam.

Wid. I'll rattle them away like smoke! there are no vapours where I come. I hate your dumps, and your nerves, and your megrims; and I had much rather break your rest with a little racketting, than let any thing get into your head that should not be there, Mr Whittol.

Whit. I will take care that nothing shall be in my head, but what ought to be there: What a deliverance!

[*Aside.*

Wid. [*Looking at her watch.*] Bless me! how the hours of the clock creep away when we are plased with our company! But I must lave you, for there are half a hundred people waiting for me to pick your pocket, Mr Whittol. And there is my own brother, lieutenant O'Neale, is to arrive this morning; and he is so like me, you would not know us asunder when we are together. You will be very fond of him, poor lad! He lives by his wits, as you do by your fortune, and so you may assist one another. Mr Whittol, your obedient, 'till we meet at the pantaon. Follow me, Pompey! and Skips, do you follow him.

Pom. The Baccararo white man no let blacky boy go first after you, missis; they pull and pinch me.

Foot. It is a shame, your ladyship, that a black negro should take place of English christians—We can't follow him, indeed.

Wid. Then you may follow one another out of my sarvice: if you follow me, you shall follow him, for he shall go before me: Can't I make him your superior, as the laws of the land have made him your equal? therefore, resign as fast as you plase; you shan't oppose government, and keep your places, too; that is not good politics in England or Ireland either; so, come along, Pompey, be after going before me——Mr Whittol, most tinderly yours.

[*Exit.*

Whit. Most tinderly yours! [*Mimicks her.*]—Ecod, I believe you are, and any body's else.—O what an escape have I had! But how shall I clear myself of this business? I'll serve her as I would bad money, put her off into other hands: My nephew is fool enough to be in love with her, and if I give him a fortune, he'll take the good and the bad together—He shall do so, or starve. I'll send for Bates directly, confess my folly, ask his pardon, send him to my nephew, write and declare off with the widow, and so get rid of her *tinderness* as fast as I can.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A room in* WHITTLE'S *house.*

Enter BATES *and* NEPHEW.

Neph. [*Taking him by the hand.*] We are bound to you for ever, Mr Bates: I can say no more; words but ill express the real feelings of the heart.

Bates. I know you are a good lad, or I would not have meddled in the matter; but the business is not yet completed till *signatum et sigillatum.*

Neph. Let me fly to the widow, and tell her how prosperously we go on.

Bates. Don't be in a hurry, young man! She is not in the dark, I assure you, nor has she yet finished her part: so capital an actress should not be idle in the last act.

Neph. I could wish that you would let me come into my uncle's proposal at once, without vexing him farther.

Bates. Then I declare off. Thou silly young man, are you to be duped by your own weak good nature, and his worldly craft? This does not arise from his love and justice to you, but from his own miserable situation; he must be tortured into justice: He shall not only give up your whole estate, which he is loth to part with, but you must now have a premium for agreeing to your own happiness. What, shall your widow, with wit and spirit, that would do the greatest honour to our sex, go through her task cheerfully, and shall your courage give way, and be outdone by a woman's?—fie for shame!

Neph. I beg your pardon, Mr Bates! I will follow your directions: be as hard-hearted as my uncle, and vex his body and mind for the good of his soul.

Bates. That's a good child! and remember that your own, and the widow's future happiness, depends upon your both going through this business with spirit; make your uncle feel for himself, that he may do justice to other people. Is the widow ready for the last experiment?

Neph. She is. But think what anxiety I shall feel while she is in danger!

Bates. Ha, ha, ha! she'll be in no danger; besides, shan't we be at hand to assist her?—— Hark! I hear him coming: I'll probe his callous heart to the quick! and, if we are not paid for our trouble, say I am no politician. Fly: now we shall do!

[*Exit Nephew.*

Enter WHITTLE.

Whit. Well, Mr Bates, have you talked with my nephew? is not he overjoyed at the proposal?

Bates. The demon of discord has been among you, and has untuned the whole family; you have screwed him too high: the young man is out of his senses, I think: he stares and mopes about, and sighs—looks at me, indeed, but gives very absurd answers. I don't like him.

Whit. What's the matter, think you?

Bates. What I have always expected. There is a crack in your family, and you take it by turns! you have had it, and now transfer it to your nephew; which, to your shame be it spoken, is the only transfer you have ever made him.

Whit. But am not I going to do him more than justice?

Bates. As you have done him much less than justice hitherto, you can't begin too soon.

Whit. Am not I going to give him the lady he likes, and which I was going to marry myself?

Bates. Yes, that is, you are taking a perpetual blister off your own back, to clap it upon his? What a tender uncle you are!

Whit. But you don't consider the estate which I shall give him?

Bates. Restore to him, you mean; 'tis his own, and you should have given it up long ago: you must do more, or Old Nick will have you.—— Your nephew won't take the widow off your hands without a fortune——throw him ten thousand into the bargain.

Whit. Indeed, but I shan't; he shall run mad, and I'll marry her myself, rather than do that.—— Mr Bates, be a true friend, and sooth my nephew to consent to my proposal.

Bates. You have raised the fiend, and ought to lay him; however, I'll do my best for you:—— When the head is turned, nothing can bring it right again so soon as ten thousand pounds.—— Shall I promise for you?

Whit. I'll sooner go to Bedlam myself. [*Exit* BATES.] Why, I am in a worse condition than I was before! If this widow's father will not let me be off without providing for his daughter, I may lose a great sum of money, and none of us be the better for it. My nephew half mad! myself half married! and no remedy for either of us!

Enter Servant.

Ser. Sir Patrick O'Neale is come to wait upon you; would you please to see him?

Whit. By all means, the very person I wanted; don't let him wait. [*Exit Servant.*] I wonder if he has seen my letter to the widow; I will sound him by degrees, that I may be sure of my mark before I strike my blow.

Enter SIR PATRICK.

Sir Pat. Mr Whizzle, your humble servant.—It gives me great pleasure, that an old jontleman of your property, will have the honour of being united with the family of the O'Nales! We have been too much jontlemen not to spend our estate, as you have made yourself a kind of jontleman by getting one. One runs out one way, and t'other runs in another; which makes them both meet at last, and keeps up the balance of Europe.

Whit. I am much obliged to you, sir Patrick; I am an old gentleman, you say true; and I was thinking——

Sir Pat. And I was thinking, if you were ever so old, my daughter can't make you young again: She has as rich fine thick blood in her veins as any in all Ireland. I wish you had a swate crater of a daughter like mine, that we might make a double cross of it.

Whit. That would be a double cross, indeed! [*Aside.*

Sir Pat. Though I was miserable enough with my first wife, who had the devil of a spirit—and the very model of her daughter—yet a brave man never shrinks from danger, and I may have better luck another time.

Whit. Yes; but I am no brave man, sir Patrick; and I begin to shrink already.

Sir Pat. I have bred her up in great subjection; she is as tame as a young colt, and as tinder as a sucking chicken. You will find her a true jontlewoman; and so knowing, that you can teach her nothing: She brings every thing but money, and you have enough of that, if you have nothing else; and that is what I call the balance of things.

Whit. But I have been considering your daughter's great deserts, and my great age——

Sir Pat. She's a charming crater; I would venture to say that, if I was not her father.

Whit. I say, sir, as I have been considering your daughter's great deserts, and as I own I have great demerits———

Sir Pat. To be sure you have; but you can't help that: And if my daughter was to mention any thing of a fleering at your age, or your stinginess, by the balance of power, but I would make her repate it a hundred times to your face, to make her ashamed of it. But mum, old jontleman, the devil a word of your infirmities will she touch upon: I have brought her up to softness, and to gentleness, as a kitten to new milk; she will spake nothing but *no*, and *yes*, as if she were dumb; and no tame rabbit or pigeon will keep house, or be more inganious with her needle and tambouline.

Whit. She is vastly altered then, since I saw her last, or I have lost my senses; and, in either case, we had much better, since I must speak plain, not come together.

Sir Pat. 'Till you are married, you mane?—With all my heart, it is the more gentale for that, and like our family. I never saw lady O'Nale, your mother-in-law, who, poor crater, is dead, and can never be a mother-in-law again, 'till the week before I married her; and I did not care if I had never seen her then; which is a comfort, too, in case of death, or accidents in life.

Whit. But you don't understand me, sir Patrick. I say——

Sir Pat. I say, how can that be, when we both spake English?

Whit. But you mistake my meaning, and don't comprehend me.

Sir Pat. Then, you don't comprehend yourself, Mr Whizzle; and I have not the gift of prophecy to find out, after you have spoke, what never was in you.

Whit. Let me intreat you to attend to me a little.

Sir Pat. I do attend, man; I don't interrupt you—out with it!

Whit. Your daughter—

Sir Pat. Your wife that is to be. Go on—

Whit. My wife that is *not* to be—Zounds! will you hear me?

Sir Pat. To be, or *not* to be, is that the question? I can swear, too, if he wants a little of that.

Whit. Dear sir Patrick, hear me! I confess myself unworthy of her; I have the greatest regard for you, sir Patrick; I should think myself honoured by being in your family; but there are many reasons—

Sir Pat. To be sure, there are many reasons why an old man should not marry a young woman; but that was your business, and not mine.

Whit. I have wrote a letter to your daughter, which I was in hopes you had seen, and brought me an answer to it.

Sir Pat. What the devil, Mr Whizzle! do you make a letter-porter of me? Do you imagine, you dirty fellow, with your cash, that sir Patrick O'Nale would carry your letters? I would have you know that I despise your letters, and all that belong to them; nor would I carry a letter to the king. Heaven bless him! unless it came from myself.

Whit. But, dear sir Patrick, don't be in a passion for nothing!

Sir Pat. What! is it nothing to make a penny postman of me? But I'll go to my daughter directly, for I have not seen her to-day; and, if I find that you have written any thing that I won't understand, I shall take it as an affront to my family; and you shall either let out the noble blood of the O'Nales, or I will spill the last drop of the red puddle of the Whizzles. [*Going, and returns.*] Hark'e, you Mr Whizzle, Wheezle, Whistle, what's your name? You must not stir, till I come back; if you offer to ate, drink, or

sleep, till my honour is satisfied, 'twill be the worst male you ever took in your life; you had better fast a year, and die at the end of six months, than dare to lave your house. So now, Mr Weezle, you are to do as you plase.

[*Exit* SIR PAT.

Whit. Now the devil is at work, indeed! If some miracle don't save me, I shall run mad, like my nephew, and have a long Irish sword through me into the bargain. While I am in my senses, I won't have the woman; and, therefore, he that is out of them shall have her, if I give half my fortune to make the match. Thomas!

Enter THOMAS.

Whit. Sad work, Thomas!

Tho. Sad work, indeed! why would you think of marrying? I knew what it would come to.

Whit. Why, what is it come to?

Tho. It is in all the papers.

Whit. So much the better; then nobody will believe it.

Tho. But they come to me to inquire.

Whit. And you contradict it?

Tho. What signifies that? I was telling lady Gabble's footman at the door just now, that it was all a lie; and your nephew looks out of the two-pair-of-stairs window, with eyes all on fire, and tells the whole story: Upon that, there gathered such a mob!

Whit. I shall be murdered, and have my house pulled down into the bargain!

Tho. It is all quiet again. I told them the young man was out of his senses, and that you were out of town; so they went away quietly, and said they would come and mob you another time.

Whit. Thomas, what shall I do?

Tho. Nothing you have done, if you will have matters mend.

Whit. I am out of my depth, and you won't lend me your hand to draw me out.

Tho. You are out of your depth to fall in love; swim away as fast as you can; you'll be drowned, if you marry.

Whit. I'm frightened out of my wits. Yes, yes, 'tis all over with me; I must not stir out of my house; but am ordered to stay to be murdered in it, for aught I know. What are you muttering, Thomas? Prithee speak out, and comfort me!

Tho. It is all a judgment upon you; because your brother's foolish will says, the young man must have your consent, you won't let him have her, but will marry the widow yourself! That's the dog in the manger; you can't eat the oats, and won't let those who can.

Whit. But I consent that he shall have both the widow and the fortune, if we can get him into his right senses.

Tho. For fear I should lose mine, I'll get out of bedlam as soon as possible; you must provide yourself with another servant.

Whit. The whole earth conspires against me! You shall stay with me till I die, and then you shall have a good legacy; and I won't live long, I promise you!

[*Knocking at the door.*

Tho. Here are the undertakers already.

[*Exit* THO.

Whit. What shall I do? my head can't bear it; I will hang myself for fear of being run through the body.

THOMAS *returns with bills.*

Tho. Half a score people I never saw before, with these bills and drafts upon you for payment, signed Martha Brady.

Whit. I wish Martha Brady was at the bottom of the Thames! What an impudent extravagant baggage, to begin her tricks already! Send them to the devil, and say I won't pay a farthing!

Tho. You'll have another mob about the door.

[*Going.*

Whit. Stay, stay, Thomas; tell them I am very busy, and they must come to-morrow morning. Stay, stay! that is promising payment. No, no, no; tell them they must stay till I am married, and so they will be satisfied, and tricked into the bargain.

Tho. When you are tricked, we shall all be satisfied.

[*Aside.*

[*Exit* THO.

Whit. That of all dreadful things I should think of a woman, and that woman should be a widow, and that widow should be an Irish one! *quem Deus vult perdere*—Who have we here? Another of the family, I suppose?

[WHIT. *retires.*

Enter WIDOW, *as* LIEUTENANT O'NEALE, *seemingly fluttered, and putting up his sword*, THOMAS *following.*

Tho. I hope you are not hurt, captain?

Wid. O not at all, at all; 'tis well they run away, or I should have made them run faster: I shall teach them how to snigger, and look through glasses at their betters. These are your Maccaroons, as they call themselves: By my soul, but I would have stood till I had overtaken them. These whipper-snappers look so much more like girls in breeches, than those I see in petticoats, that, fait and trot, it is a pity to hurt them: The fair sex in London here, seem the most masculine of the two. But to business: friend, where is your master?

Tho. There, captain; I hope he has not offended you.

Wid. If you are impartinent, sir, you will offend me. Lave the room.

Tho. I value my life too much not to do that.

—What a raw-boned Tartar! I wish he had not been caught and sent here.

[*Aside to his master, and exit.*

Whit. Her brother, by all that's terrible! And as like her as two tygers! I sweat at the sight of him; I'm sorry Thomas is gone——He has been quarrelling already.

Wid. Is your name Whittol?

Whit. My name is Whittle, not Whittol.

Wid. We shan't stand for trifles——And you were born and christened by the name of Thomas?

Whit. So they told me, sir.

Wid. Then they told no lies, fait! so far, so good.—[*Takes out a letter.*]—Do you know that hand-writing?

Whit. As well as I know this good friend of mine, who helps me upon such occasions.

[*Showing his right hand, and smiling.*

Wid. You had better not show your teeth, sir, till we come to the jokes——the hand-writing is yours?

Whit. Yes, sir, it is mine. [*Sighs.*

Wid. Death and powder! What do you sigh for? are you ashamed or sorry for your handy-work?

Whit. Partly one, partly t'other.

Wid. Will you be plased, sir, to rade it aloud, that you may know it again when you hare it?

Whit. [*Takes his letter, and reads.*] *Madam*—

Wid. Would you be plased to let us know what madam you mane? for women of quality, and women of no quality, and women of all qualities, are so mixt together, that you don't know one from t'other, and are all called madams. You should always read the subscription before you open the letter.

Whit. I beg your pardon, sir. I don't like this ceremony. [*Aside.*] To Mrs Brady in Pall-Mall.

Wid. Now prosade——Fire and powder, but I would——

Whit. Sir! what's the matter?

Wid. Nothing at all, sir; pray go on.

Whit. [*Reads.*] 'Madam—as I prefer your 'happiness, to the indulgence of my own pas-'sions'——

Wid. I will not prefer your happiness to the indulgence of my passions——Mr Whittol; rade on.

Whit. 'I must confess, that I am unworthy of 'your charms and virtues——'

Wid. Very unworthy, indeed. Rade on, sir.

Whit. 'I have for some days had a severe 'struggle between my justice and my passion'—

Wid. I have had no struggle at all: My justice and passion are agreed.

Whit. 'The former has prevailed; and I beg 'leave to resign you, with all your accomplish-'ments, to some more deserving, though not 'more admiring servant, than your most miser-'ble and devoted,'

'THOMAS WHITTLE.

Wid. And miserable and devoted you shall be—To the postscript; rade on.

Whit. 'Postscript: Let me have your pity, 'but not your anger.'

Wid. In answer to this love epistle, you pitiful fellow, my sister presents you with her tinderest wishes; and assures you, that you have, as you desire, her pity, and she generously throws her contempt, too, into the bargain.

Whit. I'm infinitely obliged to her.

Wid. I must beg lave, in the name of all our family, to present the same to you.

Whit. I am ditto to all the family.

Wid. But as a brache of promise to any of our family was never suffered without a bradie into somebody's body, I have fixed upon myself to be your operator; and I believe that you will find that I have as fine a hand at this work, and will give you as little pain, as any in the three kingdoms.

[*Sits down and loosens her knee bands.*

Whit. For Heaven's sake, captain, what are you about?

Wid. I always loosen my garters for the advantage of lunging: it is for your sake, as well as my own; for I will be twice through your body before you shall feel me once.

Whit. What a bloody fellow it is! I wish Thomas would come in.

Wid. Come, sir, prepare yourself; you are not the first, by half a score, that I have run through and through the heart, before they knew what was the matter with them.

Whit. But, captain, suppose I will marry your sister!

Wid. I have not the laste objection, if you recover of your wounds. Callagon O'Connor lives very happy with my great aunt, Mrs Deborah O'Nale, in the county of Galway; except a small asthma he got by my running him through the lungs at the Currough: He would have forsaken her, if I had not stopped his perfidy, by a famous family styptic I have here. O ho! my little old boy, but you shall get it.

[*Draws.*

Whit. What shall I do?——Well, sir, if I must, I must: I'll meet you to-morrow morning in Hyde-Park, let the consequence be what it will.

Wid. For fear you might forget that favour, I must beg to be indulged with a little pushing now. I have set my heart upon it; and two birds in hand is worth one in the bushes, Mr Whittol.—Come, sir.

Whit. But I have not settled my matters.

Wid. O we'll settle them in a trice, I warrant you.

[*Puts herself in a posture.*

Whit. But I don't understand the sword; I had rather fight with pistols.

Wid. I am very happy it is in my power to oblige you. There, sir, take your choice; I will plase you if I can.

[*Offers pistols.*

Whit. Out of the pan into the fire! there's no putting him off: If I had chosen poison, I dare swear he had arsenic in his pocket. Look'e, young gentleman, I am an old man, and you'll get no credit by killing me; but I have a nephew as young as yourself, and you'll get more honour in facing him.

Wid. Ay, and more pleasure too——I expect ample satisfaction from him, after I have done your business. Prepare, sir!

Whit. What the devil! won't one serve your turn? I can't fight, and I won't fight: I'll do any thing rather than fight. I'll marry your sister. My nephew shall marry her: I'll give him all my fortune. What would the fellow have? Here, Nephew! Thomas! murder, murder!

[*He flies, and she pursues.*

Enter BATES *and* NEPHEW.

Neph. What's the matter, uncle?

Whit. Murder, that's all: That ruffian there would kill me, and eat me afterwards.

Neph. I'll find a way to cool him! Come out, sir, I am as mad as yourself. I'll match you, I warrant you.

[*Going out with him.*

Wid. I'll follow you all the world over.

[*Going after him.*

Whit. Stay, stay, nephew; you shan't fight: We shall be exposed all over the town; and you may lose your life, and I shall be cursed from morning to night. Do, nephew, make yourself and me happy; be the olive-branch, and bring peace into my family. Return to the widow. I will give you my consent and your fortune, and a fortune for the widow! five thousand pounds! Do persuade him, Mr Bates.

Bates. Do, sir; this is a very critical point of your life. I know you love her; 'tis the only method to restore us all to our senses.

Neph. I must talk in private first with this hot young gentleman.

Wid. As private as you plase, sir.

Whit. Take their weapons away, Mr Bates; and do you follow me to my study to witness my proposal: It is all ready, and only wants signing. Come along, come along! [*Exit.*

Bates. Victoria, victoria! give me your swords and pistols: And now do your worst, you spirited, loving, young couple; I could leap out of my skin! [*Exit.*

Tho. [*Peeping in.*] Joy, joy to you, ye fond, charming pair! the fox is caught, and the young lambs may skip and play. I leave you to your transports! [*Exit.*

Neph. O my charming widow! what a day have we gone through!

Wid. I would go through ten times as much to deceive an old amorous spark like your uncle, to purchase a young one like his nephew.

Neph. I listened at the door all this last scene; my heart was agitated with ten thousand fears. Suppose my uncle had been stout, and drawn his sword?

Wid. I should have run away as he did. When two cowards meet, the struggle is, who shall run first; and sure I can beat an old man at any thing.

Neph. Permit me thus to seal my happiness; [*Kisses her hand.*] and be assured, that I am as sensible as I think myself undeserving of it.

Wid. I'll tell you what, sir; were I not sure you deserved some pains, I would not have taken any pains for you: And don't imagine now, because I have gone a little too far for the man I love, that I shall go a little too far when I'm your wife. Indeed I shan't: I have done more than I should before I am your wife, because I was in despair; but I won't do as much as I may when I am your wife, though every Irish woman is fond of imitating English fashions.

Neph. Thou divine adorable woman!

[*Kneels and kisses her hand.*

Enter WHITTLE *and* BATES.

Bates. Confusion! [*Aside.*

Whit. [*Turning to* BATES.] Heyday! I am afraid his head is not right yet! he was kneeling, and kissing the captain's hand.

[*Aside to* BATES.

Bates. Take no notice; all will come about.

[*Aside to* WHITTLE.

Wid. I find, Mr Whittol, your family loves kissing better than fighting: He swears I am as like my sister as two pigeons. I could excuse his raptures, for I had rather fight the best friend I have, than slobber and salute him a la Francoise.

Enter SIR PATRICK O'NEALE.

Sir Pat. I hope, Mr Whizzle, you'll excuse my coming back to give you an answer, without having any to give. I hear a grate dale of news about myself, and came to know if it be true. They say my son is in London, when he tells me himself by letter here, that he's at Limerick; and I have been with my daughter to tell her the news, but she would not stay at home to receive it, so I am come—*O gra ma chree, my little din ousil craw*, what have we got here? a piece of mummery! Here is my son and daughter too, fait! What, are you wearing the breeches, Pat, to see how they become you when you are Mrs Weezel?

Wid. I beg your pardon for that, sir! I wear them before marriage, because I think they become a woman better than after.

Whit. What, is not this your son?

[*Astonished.*

Sir Pat. No, but it is my daughter, and that's the same thing.

Wid. And your niece, sir, which is better than either.

Whit. Mighty well! and I suppose you have not lost your wits, young man!

Neph. I sympathize with you, sir; we lost them together, and found them at the same time.

Whit. Here's villainy! Mr Bates, give me the paper. Not a farthing shall they have 'till the law gives it them.

Bates. We'll cheat the law, and give it them now. [*Gives Nephew the paper.*

Whit. He may take his own, but he shan't have a sixpence of the five thousand pounds I promised him.

Bates. Witness, good folks, he owns to the promise.

Sir Pat. Fait I'll witness dat, or any thing else in a good cause.

Whit. What! am I choused again?

Bates. Why should not my friend be choused out of a little justice for the first time? Your hard usage has sharpened your nephew's wits; therefore beware, don't play with edge-tools——you'll only cut your fingers.

Sir Pat. And your trote, too: which is all one: Therefore, to make all azy, marry my daughter first, and then quarrel with her afterwards; that will be in the natural course of things.

Whit. Here, Thomas! where are you?

Enter THOMAS.

Whit. Here are fine doings! I am deceived, tricked, and cheated!

Tho. I wish you joy, sir; the best thing could have happened to you; and, as a faithful servant, I have done my best to check you.

Whit. To check me!

Tho. You were galloping full speed, and down hill, too; and, if we had not laid hold of the bridle, being a bad jockey, you would have hung by your horns in the stirrup, to the great joy of the whole town.

Whit. What, have you helped to trick me?

Tho. Into happiness. You have been foolish a long while, turn about and be wise. He has got the woman and his estate: Give them your blessing, which is not worth much, and like live a Christian for the future.

Whit. I will, if I can: But I can't look at them; I can't bear the sound of my voice, nor the sight of my own face. Look ye, I am distressed and distracted! and can't come to yet: I will be reconciled, if possible: but don't let me see or hear from you, if you would have me forget and forgive you—I shall never lift up my head again!

Wid. I hope, sir Patrick, that my preferring the nephew to the uncle will meet with your approbation: Though we have not so much money, we shall have more love; one mind, and half a purse in marriage, are much better than two minds and two purses. I did not come to England, nor keep good company, till it was too late to get rid of my country prejudices.

Sir Pat. You are out of my hands, Pat; so, if you won't trouble me with your afflictions, I shall sincerely rejoice at your felicity.

Neph. It would be a great abatement of my present joy, could I believe that this lady should be assisted in her happiness, or be supported in her afflictions, by any one but her lover and husband.

Sir Pat. Fine notions are fine tings, but a fine estate gives every ting but ideas; and them too, if you'll appale to those who help you to spend it—What say you, widow?

Wid. By your and their permission, I will tell my mind to this good company; and for fear my words should want ideas too, I will add an Irish tune, that may carry off a bad voice and bad matter.

SONG.

A widow bewitched with her passion,
Though Irish, is now quite ashamed,
To think that she's so out of fashion,
To marry, and then to be tamed:
'Tis love the dear joy,
That old fashioned boy,
Has got in my breast with his quiver;
The blind urchin he
Struck the *Cush la maw cree*,
And a husband secures me for ever!
Ye fair ones I hope will excuse me;
Though vulgar, pray do not abuse me;
I cannot become a fine lady,
O love has bewitched Widow Brady.

Ye critics, to murder so willing,
Pray see all our errors with blindness;
For once change your method of killing,
And kill a fond widow with kindness.
If you look so severe,
In a fit of despair,
Again I will draw forth my steel, sirs:
You know I've the art,
To be twice through your heart,
Before I can make you to feel, sirs.
Brother soldiers, I hope you'll protect me,
Nor let cruel critics dissect me;
To favour my cause be but ready,
And grateful you'll find Widow Brady.

Ye leaders of dress and the fashions,
Who gallop post-haste to your ruin,
Whose taste has destroyed all your passions,
Pray, what do you think of my wooing?
You call it damned low,
Your heads and arms so, [*Mimicks them.*
So listless, so loose, and so lazy;
But pray, what can you
That I cannot do?
O fie, my dear craters, be azy!
Ye patriots and courtiers so hearty,
To speech it, and vote for your party;
For once be both constant and steady,
And vote to support Widow Brady.

To all that I see here before me,
The bottom, the top, and the middle;
For music we now must implore you,
No wedding without pipe and fiddle.
If all are in tune,
Pray let it be soon;
My heart in my bosom is prancing!
If your hands should unite,
To give us delight,
O that's the best piping and dancing!
Your plaudits to me are a treasure,
Your smiles are a dower for a lady;
O joy to you all in full measure!
So wishes and prays Widow Brady.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

SULTAN;

OR,

A PEEP INTO THE SERAGLIO.

BY

BICKERSTAFF.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
SOLYMAN, *the Sultan.*	ELMIRA, ISMENA, *ladies of the seraglio.*
OSMYN, *keeper of the seraglio.*	ROXALANA, *an English captive.*

Scene—Constantinople.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An apartment in the seraglio; a throne, in manner of a couch, with a canopy, on the front of which is an escutcheon fixed, with the Ottoman arms crowned with feathers; in the back scenes the sultan's door covered with a curtain.*

Enter OSMYN *and* ELMIRA.

Osm. TELL me, what right have you to be discontented?

Elm. When first I came within these walls, I found myself a slave; and the thoughts of being shut up for ever here, terrified me to death: my tears flowed incessantly. Solyman was moved with them, and solemnly promised to restore me to my liberty, my parents, and my country.

Osm. And yet, when the sultan agreed to send you back to Georgia, you did not avail yourself of his generosity.

Elm. True; but his munificence, and, above all, the tenderness and love he expressed to me since, have reconciled me to this place, and I vainly thought my charms could have attached him to me.

Osm. Why then complain? You still possess his heart. Already you have been twice honoured with the imperial handkerchief.

Elm. His heart! does not this place contain a hundred beauties, who equally share his love? Tell the sultan I'm determined, and ready to accept the first opportunity of returning to my friends and country.

Osm. I shall procure you an answer this morning—But, hark! the sultan approaches.

[*Exit* ELMIRA.

The curtain is drawn, and the SULTAN *enters, preceded by Mutes, &c. A grand march played.*

Sul. Osmyn.

Osm. The humblest of your slaves attends.
[*Bows to the ground.*

Sul. My friend, quit this style of servitude; I am weary of it.

Osm. And of the seraglio, too, sir?

Sul. It is even so—and yet, upon reflection, I cannot tell why, unless that, having been accustomed to the noise of camps, and the business of war, I know not how to relish pleasures, which, though varied, appear insipid, through the ease and tranquillity with which they are attained.—Your voice used to charm me.

OSMYN *sings.*

Behold yonder zephyr, how lightly it blows!
And, copying of lovers, it ne'er seeks repose,
But flies to the pink, to the lily, the rose,
Caressing each flower of the garden and grove.

Then still let your pleasure variety crown,
'Mongst the different beauties that rove up and down,
Court the charms of the fair, of the black, of the brown,
They're the flowers that embellish the garden of love.

Sul. I have often told you I am not touched with mere caressing machines, who are taught to love or fear by interest.

Osm. And yet, your highness must confess, your servant has neglected nothing perfectly to content, particularly in one object he procured you.

Sul. Who is that?

Osm. The Circassian beauty—the sultana Elmira.

Sul. And, truly, she possesses all the charms that can adorn her sex.

Osm. You thought so once.

Sul. Once! I think so still.

Osm. Indeed!

Sul. Positively—why should you doubt it?

Osm. Your word is my law. But, sir, there is matter I must acquaint you with: I cannot manage the seraglio; and, by the beard of Heli, I would rather quit the helm I can no longer guide. That English slave, lately brought here, is quite ungovernable; she is sure to do every thing she is forbid; she makes a joke of our threats, and answers our most serious admonitions with a laugh: Besides, she is at variance with the rest of the women, and shows them such an example, that I cannot longer rule them.

Sul. That is your business—I will have them all agree—How do you call her?

Osm. Since she has been here, we have called her Roxalana.

Sul. Well—you must endeavour to bring her to reason.

Osm. Shall the sultana Elmira throw herself at your highness's feet, then?

Sul. Let her come—And, do you hear, Osmyn? go to the apartment of that Persian slave you spoke of yesterday, she that sings so well, and send her hither.

Osm. I will, most sublime sultan.
[*Exit* OSMYN.

Enter ELMIRA. *She kneels.*

Sul. I know before-hand, that you come to upbraid me—We have not met so often lately, as our mutual inclinations would have made agreeable; but don't attribute that to coldness, which has been the unavoidable consequence of affairs—the business of the divan has taken up so much of my time.

Elm. I don't presume to complain; for your image is so imprinted on my heart, that you are always present to my mind.

Sul. [*Impatiently.*] Nay, dear Elmira, I have not the least doubt.

Elm. How does my sovereign like this robe which I have put on, on purpose to please him?

Sul. Oh, [*Yawning.*] Elmira, you love music—I have sent for the Persian slave, who, I am told, sings so well; if she answers the description, she will afford you entertainment.

Elm. I want none, when you are present—your company suffices for every thing.

Sul. Yonder comes our singer.

Enter ISMENA.

Ism. [*Kneeling.*] Your slave attends your pleasure.

[*The* SULTAN *makes a sign to the Eunuchs, who bring two stools, and beckon Elmira to sit.*

Elm. This is an honour I did not expect.
[*Taking her seat.*

ISMENA *sings.*

Blest hero, who, in peace and war,
Triumph alike, and raise our wonder:
In peace, the shafts of love you bear;
In war, the bolts of Jove's own thunder.

[*While* ISMENA *sings,* SOLYMAN *takes* ELMIRA's *hand.*

Sul. Beautiful Ismena, methought that song did not so well express the effects of love—Madam, [*To* ELMIRA.] we will hear her again—I never heard any thing so charming—her voice is exquisite—What do you think of her?

Elm. If she bears all this, 'twill make her vain——I cannot bear all this—I am ready to burst with indignation and anger.
[*Aside and Exit.*

Sul. There is something in this slave that interests me in her favour; she shall be received among the sultana's attendants, and by that means we shall have an opportunity of hearing

her often——[*Turning, perceives* ELMIRA *gone.*] But where's the sultana? I did not perceive she had left us—Follow her, Ismena, and endeavour to amuse her.

[*Exit* ISMENA.

Enter OSMYN.

Osm. I come to tell your highness, there is no bearing that English slave; she says such things, and does such things, that——

Sul. Why, what is't she does?

Osm. She mimics me—nay, and mimics you, too.

Sul. Pho, pho!

Osm. Advice is lost upon her—When I attempt to give it, she falls a singing and dancing—There is no enduring it, if you do not permit me to correct her.

Sul. You take these things in too serious a light—She seems, indeed, a singular character.

Osm. She has the impudence of the devil: but just now, I threatened to complain to you of her, she said she would complain of me—And here she comes.

Enter ROXALANA.

Sul. How now!

Rox. Well, Heaven be praised, at least here is something like a human figure. You are, sir, I suppose, the sublime sultan, whose slave I have the honour to be: if so, pray oblige me so far, as to drive from your presence that horrid ugly creature there; for he shocks my sight.—[*To* OSMYN.] Do you hear? Go!

Sul. [*Gravely.*] They complain, Roxalana, of your irreverent behaviour; you must learn to treat the officers of our seraglio, whom we have set over you, with more deference. All, in this place, honour their superiors, and obey in silence.

Rox. In silence!—and obey! is this a sample of your Turkish gallantry?—You must be vastly loved indeed, if you address women in that strain.

Sul. Consider you are not now in your own country.

Rox. No, indeed; you make me feel the difference severely——There, reigns ease, content, and liberty; every citizen is himself a king, where the king is himself a citizen.

Sul. Have a humour more gentle and pliable; I advise you to alter your behaviour for very good reasons; and it is for your good: there are very rigorous laws in the seraglio for such as are refractory.

Rox. Upon my word, you have made a very delicate speech, and I admire the gravity with which it was uttered.

Sul. Roxalana, I am serious.

Osm. What does your highness think now? Did I tell you the truth?

Rox. Oh, whispering—What is it that monster says?—that what-do-you-call him, that good-for-nothing amphibious animal, who follows us like sheep here, and is for ever watching us with his frightful glaring eyes, as if he would devour us—Is this the confidante of your pleasures—the guardian of our chastity?—I must do him the justice to confess, that if you give him money for making himself hated, he certainly does not steal his wages. We can't step one step but he is after us; by and by, I suppose, he will weigh out air, and measure light to us; he won't let us walk in the gardens, lest it should rain men upon us; and, if it did, 'tis a blessing we've been long wishing for.

Osm. There now! don't she go on at a fine rate?

Rox. Don't mind that ugly creature, but listen to me.—If you follow my counsel, I shall make you an accomplished prince—I wish to make you beloved—Let your window-bars be taken down—let the doors of the seraglio be thrown open—let inclination alone keep your women within it; and, instead of that ugly, odious creature there, send a handsome smart young officer to us every morning; one that will treat us like ladies, and lay out the pleasure of the day.

[*While she is speaking,* SOLYMAN *admires her.*

Sul. [*To* OSMYN.] Did you ever see so expressive a countenance.—[*To* ROXALANA.] Have you any more to say?

Rox. Yes, sir, this—To desire you will not mind him, but attend to me—Men were not born to advise—the thing is expressly the contrary—We women have certainly ten thousand times more sense—Men, indeed!—Men were born for no other purpose under heaven, but to amuse us; and he, who succeeds best, perfectly answers the end of his creation—Now, sir, farewell. If I find you profit by my first lesson, I may, perhaps, be tempted to give you another. [*Exit.*

Osm. Did you ever hear the like, sir?—Her insolence is not to be borne.

Sul. I think it amusing.

Osm. I shall certainly lose all my authority in the seraglio, if she is not corrected.

Sul. 'Tis a girl—a fool of a disposition, that chastisement would make worse—Go after her, Osmyn; bid her come back and drink sherbet with me.

Osm. Sherbet with you! sir?

Sul. I have said it—

[*Goes on the throne, takes a pipe.*

OSMYN *sings.*

Ali! Ali! Ali! Ali!
From the flippant English slave
Him, our nation's glory, save;
If thus he storms and raves for her,
Soon he will adore her.
Laws, customs, prophet, emperor,
Will sink down all before her. [*Exit.*

Well, for my life, I can't get the better of my astonishment at hearing a slave talk in so extraordinary a manner—[*Smokes.*]—And the more I think of it, my astonishment is the greater—She's not handsome, that is, what is called a beauty; yet her little nose, cocked in the air, her laughing eyes, and the play of her features, have an effect altogether—Elmira has something more soft and more majestic—yet, methinks, I have a mind to sift Roxalana's character; mere curiosity, and nothing else—It is the first time we have seen in this place a spirit of caprice and independence—I'll try, at least, what she'll say to me farther—There can be no harm to divert myself with her extravagance.

Re-enter OSMYN.

Osm. I have delivered your message.

Sul. Delivered my message! Where's Roxalana?

Osm. In her chamber, where she has locked herself in.

Sul. No matter for her being in her chamber—What did she say?

Osm. Treasure of Light, said I—through the key-hole—I come from the Sublime Sultan to kiss the dust beneath your feet, and desire you will come and drink sherbet with him. She answered through the key-hole, Go tell your master, I have no dust on my feet, and I don't like sherbet.

Sul. In effect, Osmyn, the fault is your's—you took your time ill, as you commonly do—You should have waited some time—don't you owe her respect?

Osm. And after this, would you have her come again?

Sul. Perhaps I would.

Osm. Shall I fetch the sultana Elmira, too?

Sul. What's the meaning of this, Osmyn? I tell you once more, go and bring me Roxalana.

[*Curtain moves.*

Osm. Who is it that meddles with the great curtain?

Sul. Who is it lifts that portal there?

Rox. [*Coming from behind.*] 'Tis I.

Sul. You! and how dare you take that liberty?

Osm. Ay, how dare you?—Don't you know 'tis death for any to enter there but the sultan, without being conducted?

Sul. Come, come; she's not acquainted with the customs of the seraglio; so let it pass. Roxalana, I beg your pardon—I am afraid he has disturbed you now.

Rox. Oh, it is only what I expected—You Turks are not reckoned very polite—In my country, a gallant waits upon a lady; but the custom is quite different here, I find——

[SULTAN *offers her the pipe, she strikes it down.*]

What, do you think I smoke?

Sul. How's this! Does your insolence go so far?

Osm. What do you command, sir?

Sul. Silence!

Rox. What! angry before a woman? I'm quite ashamed of you.

Sul. This is not to be suffered—and yet, there's something so foolish in it too—Come hither, Roxalana, I want to speak to you.

Rox. No, I thank you; I am very well where I am.

Sul. Tell me then, is it in this light manner women behave in England?

Rox. Pretty near it.

Sul. And suppose I should for once forget your national vivacity, would it make you more cautious for the future?—Come, give me your hand; and you may imagine I have forgot all you have said to me.

Rox. So much the worse for you. I told you a great many good things; I see my frankness is disagreeable: but you must grow used to it. Don't you think yourself very happy to find a friend in a slave? one that will teach you how to love, too; for 'tis in my country love is in its element. It is there all life and tenderness, because it is free; and yet, even there, a husband beloved is next to a prodigy. If it be then so difficult to love a husband, what must it be to love a master? I am your friend; I tell you truth: and do you know why you dislike to hear it? because it is a language your ears are unaccustomed to—But I don't mind that; I shall make you well acquainted with it—Happy would it be for every prince, had they a friend near them to tell them the truth!

Sul. But you must treat me with respect.

Rox. I treat you with respect! that would be worse still.

Sul. Indeed!

Rox. Oh, your notions are horrid!—I shall correct you.

Sul. Correct me! In what, pray?

Rox. In what concerns you.

Sul. She is the strangest mortal, sure!—But let's have no more of this.

Rox. Nay, though you don't take my lessons as patiently as I could wish, I hope you are not displeased with me? I should be sorry to offend you.

Sul. You may easily avoid it then.

Rox. It will be nothing in time.

Sul. Why, won't you consider who I am, and who you are?

Rox. Who I am, and who you are! Yes, sir, I do consider very well, that you are the Grand Sultan; I am your slave; but I am also a free-born woman, prouder of that than all the pomp and splendour eastern monarchs can bestow.

Sul. As far as I can perceive, then, you would be very glad to get away from me?

Rox. You never were more right in your life.

Sul. Well, but if I endeavour to render the seraglio agreeable to you—if I study to make you happy, might you not, in your turn, try to deserve my favour?

Rox. No.

Sul. Do you speak that sincerely?

Rox. As I think it.

Sul. And yet there is something that whispers me——

Rox. Don't believe it——I tell you, it deceives you.

Sul. And must I never expect——

Rox. Never—caprice and fancy decide all.

Sul. In caprice and fancy, then, I rest my hopes; and, in the mean time, you shall sup with me.

Rox. No——I beg to be excused—I'd rather not.

Sul. Why so? 'tis an honour that you ought—

Rox. An honour that I ought! Sir, you ought to lay aside these humiliating phrases; for, while they teach us your superior greatness, they rob you of the pleasure of being agreeable—— But, to be in good humour, sir, I ought not to accept your proposals; for I know that suppers here tend to certain things—that I can't—indeed, sir.

Sul. Well, as you please.

Rox. That is very well said; you are my pupil, you know, and should give up every point to me; and, since that is the case, instead of my supping with you, you shall dine with me.

Sul. With all my heart—be it it so—Osmyn!

Enter OSMYN.

Sul. Osmyn——

Rox. Osmyn, I say, hear my directions!—You know I am to speak——Go to the clerk of the kitchen, and desire him to provide a handsome entertainment in my apartment, as the sultan dines with me.

Osm. Did your highness order——

Sul. What do you stand for? Do as she bids you. [*Exit* OSMYN, *bowing.*

Rox. Are there not some females here, that would enliven the conversation? for example, the beautiful sultana Elmira, that accomplished favourite you love so well; her company must be agreeable; and the Persian slave, Ismena, who, I am told, sings enchantingly, and whom you love a little.

Sul. Yes—but——

Rox. I understand you——you will have her too?

Sul. It is not necessary—we'll be alone.

Rox. Alone—a *tete-a-tete* would be a great pleasure, to be sure!—Oh no!

Sul. I promise you I expect it.

Enter OSMYN.

Osm. Madam, your orders are obeyed.

Sul. Go to Elmira's apartment, and tell her I shall see her this evening. This evening, do you hear?

Rox. I don't like that whispering there—— What's that you say? you know I have told you of that ugly trick.

Sul. Nothing—I'll come to her—go.

Rox. Stay, I say! I have some business with you.

Sul. Stay!—Certainly there never was any thing half so pleasant as this creature. [*Exit.*

Rox. Go, Osmyn, to the apartments of the sultana Elmira, and to the chamber of the slave Ismena, and tell them to come and dine with the sultan. If you neglect obeying my orders, your head shall answer for it. And, do you hear? don't let them know you came from me with this invitation. Take care of your head.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Banquet, &c.*

Enter ROXALANA.

Rox. Ay, let me alone; now I have got the reins in my own hands, there shall soon be a reformation in this place, I warrant. Hey-day! what have we got here? Cushions! what, do they think we are going to prayers? Let me die, but I believe it is their dinner. What, do they mean to make me sit squat like a baboon, and tear my meat with my fingers?—Take away all this trumpery, and let us have tables and chairs, knives and forks, and dishes and plates, like Christians. And, d'ye hear, lest the best part of the entertainment should be wanting, get us some wine.—[*Mutes lift up their hands.*]—Mercy on us, what a wonder! I tell you, wine must be had. If there is none here, go to the mufti; he is a good fellow, and has some good wine, I warrant him: let the church alone to take care of themselves; they are too good judges of more solid things, not to be provided with them. [*Things are removed, and table, &c. brought on.*] Oh, here comes some of my guests——I'll hide.

[*Steps aside.*

Enter ELMIRA *and* OSMYN.

Elm. It is impossible——A pretty thing, truly, she is, to dispute the sultan's heart with me!

Osm. I tell you, her ascendancy over him is

such, that it requires the greatest art and caution to counteract it.

Elm. Well, Osmyn, be my friend: and here, take this locket, Osmyn; and be sure speak ill of all my rivals, and all the good you possibly can of me.

ROXALANA *appears.*

Osm. Death and hell! we are perceived. [*Aside, and exit.*

Rox. Take this locket, Osmyn, and be sure you speak ill of all my rivals. Ha, ha, ha!

Elm. Insipid pleasantry! Know this, however, madam, I was the first possessor of the sultan's heart; and, as such, will maintain my rights, and employ my power to keep it.

Rox. By a locket? Holloa! who waits there?

Enter OSMYN.

Go tell the grand signior to come here.

Osm. I will, madam—I'll be your friend, you may depend on me. [*Aside.*

Rox. Go. [*Exit* OSMYN.] Elmira, I don't intend to dispute the sultan's heart with you; and, to prove it, you must know, that it was I invited you to dine with him here: therefore, make the best use you can of the opportunity.

Elm. Is it possible!

Enter SULTAN *on one side;* ISMENA *and* OSMYN *on the other.*

Rox. Slaves, bring the dinner.

Sul. What do I see? Ismena and Elmira too!

Rox. What is the matter, sir?

Sul. I thought you would have been alone.

Rox. Not when good company is to be had.—Come, salute the ladies. [*He bows.*] A little lower. [*She stoops his head.*] There now—Ladies, my guest is a little awkward; but he'll improve.

Elm. Indeed, Roxalana, you go great lengths.

Sul. Let her alone; she knows it diverts me.

Rox. Well, let's be seated——I am to do the honours.

Sul. But what is all this? I never saw any thing like it before.

Rox. Where should you?—Come———

Enter Carver, with a long knife.

Who is that? what does that horrid fellow want?

Osm. It is the grand carver.

Rox. The grand carver! I thought he came to cut off our heads—Pray, Mr Carver, be so good as to carve yourself away. Come, Ismena, cut up that, and help the sultan. The ladies of my country always carve.

Sul. Why, I think this custom is much better than ours.—[*To the Carver.*] We shall have no occasion for you.

Rox. Come, some wine.

Sul. Wine!

Rox. Dinner is nothing without wine. Bring it here, Osmyn.

Osm. Must I touch the horrible potion! [*Takes the bottle between the skirts of his robe.*] There it is.

Rox. Well, Osmyn, as a reward for your services, you shall have the first of the bottle.——Here, drink.

Osm. I drink the hellish beverage! I, who am a true believer, a rigid Mussulman?

Rox. [*To the* SULTAN.] Sir, he disobeys me.

Sul. Drink, as you are ordered.

Osm. I must obey, and taste the horrible liquor—Oh! Mahomet, shut thy eyes—'Tis done—I have obeyed.

Rox. Ismena, hold your glass there.—Elmira, fill yours and the Sultan's glass.

Sul. Nay, pray dispense with me.

Rox. Dispense with you, sir! why should we dispense with you? Oh, I understand you; perhaps you don't chuse those gentlemen should see you—I will soon turn them off.——Gentlemen, you may go; we shall have no occasion for you, I believe. Come, ladies, talk a little: if you don't talk, you must sing. Ismena, oblige us with a song.

ISMENA *sings.*

In vain of their wisdom superior,
The men proudly make such a fuss;
Though our talents, forsooth, are inferior,
The boasters are governed by us.
Peer or peasant, 'tis the same,
They're our masters but in name;
Let them say whate'er they will,
Woman, woman rules them still.

At courts who would seek for promotion,
To us his petition should bring:
The state puppets are at our devotion,
And move just as we pull the string.
Favourites rise, or tumble down,
As we deign to smile or frown;
Let men say whate'er they will,
Woman, woman, rules them still.

Though assembled in grave convocation,
Men wrangle on matters of state:
Our sex on the state of the nation,
As well as themselves, could debate.
We let them talk, but 'tis most certain
That we decide behind the curtain;
Let them say whate'er they will,
Woman, woman, rules them still.

Rox. Come, sir, I insist upon your drinking.

Sul. I must do as you bid me. [*Drinks.*

Rox. That's clever!

Sul. [*Aside.*] How extraordinary is the con-

duct of this creature, endeavouring thus to display the accomplishments of her rivals! but, in every thing she is my superior. I can rest no longer.

[*Gives the handkerchief to* ROXALANA.

Rox. To me! Oh, no—Ismena, 'tis yours;—the sultan gives it as a reward for the pleasure you have given him with your charming song.

[*Gives the handkerchief to* ISMENA.

Elm. Oh! [*Faints.*

Sul. [*Snatching the handkerchief from* ISMENA, *gives it to* ELMIRA.] Elmira! 'tis yours—look up, Elmira!

Elm. Oh, sir! [*Recovering.*

Sul. [*To* ROXALANA.] For you, out of my sight, audacious! Let her be taken away immediately, and degraded to the rank of the lowest slave. [*Exit* ROXALANA, *guarded.*] But she shall be punished, madam, and you sufficiently revenged.

Elm. I do not wish it; in your love all my desires are accomplished.

Sul. If we chastise her, it must be severely.—Go, order her to be brought hither.

Elm. What is your design, sir?

Sul. I would, before her face, repair the injustice I was going to do you; excite her envy; and, rendering her punishment complete, leave her in everlasting jealousy.

Elm. I beseech you think no more of her.

Sul. Pardon me, I think differently. Let her be brought hither, I say!

Osm. Sir, they have not had time to put on her slave's habit yet.

Sul. No matter—fetch her as she is; and now, Elmira, let our endearments be redoubled in her sight.

Elm. Is that necessary, sir?

Sul. Oh, it will gall her—I know it will gall her. We feel our misfortunes with tenfold anguish, when we compare what we are with what we might have been.

Elm. It will have no effect! she is a giddy creature—her gaiety is her all.

Sul. No, no, the contrary; that's the thing that strikes me in Roxalana's character.—Through what you will call her frivolous gaiety, candour and good sense shine so apparent——

Elm. There is an end on't—if you justify her. [*Proudly.*

Sul. I justify her! far from it; and you shall presently be convinced I mean to make her feel the utmost rigour of my resentment.

Enter ROXALANA.

Here she comes—she's in affliction; and her left hand, there, endeavours to hide a humiliated countenance. [*To* ROXALANA.] Approach—Elmira! have you determined how you will dispose of her?

Elm. I shall not add to what she suffers.

Sul. How that sentiment charms me! Indeed, Elmira, I blush to think that so unworthy an object should have been able for a moment to surprise me to a degree, ever to make me forget your superior merit; but I am now your's for ever and ever.

Rox. Ha, ha, ha!

Sul. Death and hell! she laughs!

Rox. Ha, ha, ha! 'Tis involuntary, I assure you; therefore, pray forgive me: I beg your pardon.

Sul. 'Tis impudence beyond bearing! but I want to know the meaning of all this?

Rox. The meaning is plain, and any body may see with half an eye you don't love Elmira.

Sul. Whom do I love, then?

Rox. Me.

Sul. You are the object of my anger.

Rox. That don't signify; love and anger often go together; I am the object of your anger, because I treat you with the sincerity of a friend: but, with your highness's permission, I shall take myself away this moment for ever.

Sul. Go, then, and prefer infamy to grandeur!

Rox. I will instantly get out of your sublime presence. [*Going.*

Sul. No, you shan't go! Elmira, do you withdraw. [*Exit* ELMIRA.] Were I to give way to my transports, I should make you feel the weight of my displeasure; but I frame excuses for you, that you scorn to make for yourself—What, despise my favours, insult my condescension! Sure, you can't be sensible of your own folly! Proceed! go on! continue to enrage your too indulgent master.

Rox. You are my master, it is true! but could the robber, that sold me to you for a thousand sequins, transfer my mind and inclinations to you, along with my person? No, sir; let it never be said that the great Solyman nobly triumphed over the person of the slave, whose mind he could not subdue.

Sul. Tell me who you are? what species of inconsistent being, at once so trifling and respectable, that you seduce my heart, while you teach me my duty?

Rox. I am nothing but a poor slave, who is your friend.

Sul. Be still my friend, my mistress! for hitherto I have known only flatterers. I here devote myself to you, and the whole empire shall pay you homage.

Rox. But, pray, tell me, then, by what title am I to govern here?

Sul. By what title? I don't understand you—Come, come, no more of this affected coyness and dissembling. I see, I know you love me.

Rox. As Solyman I do, but not as emperor of the Turks—nor will I ever consent to re-

cend his bed at night, at whose feet I must fall in the morning.

Sul. If it depended upon me, Roxalana, I swear by our holy prophet, that I should be happy in calling you my queen.

Rox. That's a poor excuse. Had the man I loved but a cottage, I would gladly partake it with him; would sooth his vexations, and soften his cares: but, were he the master of a throne, I should expect to share it with him, or he has no love for me.

Sul. Or, if you will wait, perhaps time will bring it about.

Rox. Wait, indeed! No, sir! Your wife, or humble servant——My resolution is fixed——fix yours.

Sul. But an emperor of the Turks——

Rox. May do as he pleases, and should be despotic sometimes on the side of reason and virtue.

Sul. Then, there is our law——

Rox. Which is monstrous and absurd.

Sul. The mufti, the vizirs, and the agas——

Rox. Are your slaves—Set them a good example.

Sul. Besides, what would the people say?

Rox. The people! are they to govern you?—Make the people happy, and they will not prevent your being so. They would be pleased to see you raise to the throne one that you love, and would love you, and be beloved by your people. Should she interpose in behalf of the unfortunate, relieve the distressed by her munificence, and diffuse happiness through the palace, she would be admired—she would be adored—she would be like the queen of the country from whence I came.

Sul. It is enough—my scruples are at an end—my prejudices, like clouds before the rising sun, vanish before the lights of your superior reason—My love is no longer a foible—you are worthy of empire.

Enter OSMYN.

Osm. Most sublime sultan! the sultana Elmira claims your promise for liberty to depart.

Rox. Is that the case? Let, then, the first instance of my exaltation be to give her liberty——let the gates of the seraglio be thrown open.

Sul. And as for Elmira, she shall go in a manner suitable to her rank.

[*Exit* OSMYN.

OSMYN *returns.*

Osm. Sir, the dwarfs and bostangis your highness had ordered, attend.

Sul. Let them come in—This day is devoted to festivity; and you, who announce my decree, proclaim to the world, that the sultana Roxalana reigns the unrivalled partner of our diadem.

Osm. There's an end of my office——Who would have thought, that a little cocked-up nose would have overturned the customs of a mighty empire!

Sul. Now, my Roxalana, let the world observe, by thy exaltation, the wonderful dispensation of Providence, which evinces, that

The liberal mind, by no distinction bound,
Through Nature's glass looks all the world around;
Would all that's beautiful together join,
And find perfection in a mind like thine.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

BON TON;

OR,

HIGH LIFE ABOVE STAIRS.

BY

GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
LORD MINIKIN, *a modern man of fashion.*	LADY MINIKIN, *wife to* LORD MINIKIN.
SIR JOHN TROTLEY, *devoted to old times.*	MISS TITTUP, *niece to* SIR JOHN TROTLEY.
COLONEL TIVY, *pretending love to* MISS TITTUP.	GYMP, *maid to* LADY MINIKIN.
JESSAMY, } *servants to* LORD MINIKIN.	
MIGNON, }	
DAVY, *servant to* SIR JOHN TROTLEY.	

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter LADY MINIKIN *and* MISS TITTUP.

Lady Min. IT is not, my dear, that I have the least regard for my lord. I had no love for him, before I married him; and you know, matrimony is no breeder of affection; but it hurts my pride, that he should neglect me, and run after other women.

Miss Tit. Ha, ha, ha! how can you be so hypocritical, lady Minikin, as to pretend to uneasiness at such trifles? but pray, have you made any discoveries of my lord's gallantry?

Min. New discoveries! why, I saw him yesterday morning in a hackney-coach, inx in a pink cardinal; you shall absorn yours, Tittup, for I shall never bear e of that colour again.

Miss Tit. Sure she does not suspect me: [*Aside.*] And where was your ladyship, pray, when you saw him?

Lady Min. Taking the air with colonel Tivy in his vis à vis.

Miss Tit. But, my dear lady Minikin, how can you be so angry, that my lord was hurting your pride, as you call it, in the hackney-coach, when you had him so much in your power, in the vis-à-vis?

Lady Min. What, with my lord's friend, and my friend's lover! [*Takes her by the hand.*] O fy, Tittup!

Miss Tit. Pooh, pooh, love and friendship are very fine names, to be sure; but they are mere visiting acquaintances; we know their names, indeed, talk of them sometimes, and let them knock at our doors, but we never let them in, you know. [*Looking roguishly at her.*

Lady Min. I vow, Tittup, you are extremely polite.

Miss Tit. I am extremely indifferent in these affairs, thanks to my education. We must marry, you know, because other people of fashion marry; but I should think very meanly of myself, if, after I was married, I should feel the least concern at all about my husband.

Lady Min. I hate to praise myself; and yet I may, with truth, aver, that no woman of quality ever had, can have, or will have, so consummate a contempt for her lord, as I have for my most honourable and puissant earl of Minikin, viscount Perriwinkle, and baron Titmouse—Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Tit. But, is it not strange, lady Minikin, that merely his being your husband should create such indifference? for certainly, in every other eye, his lordship has great accomplishments.

Lady Min. Accomplishments! thy head is certainly turned; if you know any of them, pray let's have them; they are a novelty, and will amuse me.

Miss Tit. Imprimis, he is a man of quality.

Lady Min. Which, to be sure, includes all the cardinal virtues—poor girl!—go on!

Miss Tit. He is a very handsome man.

Lady Min. He has a very bad constitution.

Miss Tit. He has wit.

Lady Min. He is a lord, and a little goes a great way.

Miss Tit. He has great good nature.

Lady Min. No wonder—he's a fool.

Miss Tit. And then his fortune, you'll allow—

Lady Min. Was a great one—but he games, and, if fairly, he's undone; if not, he deserves to be hanged—and so, exit my lord Minikin. And now, let your wise uncle, and my good cousin, sir John Trotley, baronet, enter; where is he, pray?

Miss Tit. In his own room, I suppose, reading pamphlets and newspapers against the enormities of the times. If he stays here a week longer, notwithstanding my expectations from him, I shall certainly affront him.

Lady Min. I am a great favourite; but it is impossible much longer to act up to his very righteous ideas of things. Isn't it pleasant to hear him abuse every body, and every thing, and yet always finishing with a 'You'll excuse me, cousin?' Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Tit. What do you think the Goth said to me yesterday? one of the knots of his tye hanging down his left shoulder, and his fringed cravat nicely twisted down his breast, and thrust through his gold button-hole, which looked exactly like my little Barbet's head in his gold collar—'Niece Tittup,' cries he, drawing himself up, 'I protest against this manner of conducting 'yourself both at home and abroad.'—'What 'are your objections, sir John?' answered I, a little pertly—'Various and manifold,' replied he; 'I have no time to enumerate particulars now, 'but I will venture to prophecy, if you keep 'whirling round the vortex of pantheons, operas, 'festinos, coteries, masquerades, and all the de-'vilades in this town, your head will be giddy, 'down you will fall, lose the name of Lucretia, 'and be called nothing but Tittup ever after—'You'll excuse me, cousin!'—and so he left me.

Lady Min. O, the barbarian!

Enter GYMP.

Gymp. A card, your ladyship, from Mrs Pewitt.

Lady Min. Poor Pewitt! If she can but be seen at public places with a woman of quality, she's the happiest of plebeians.

[*Reads the card.*

'Mrs Pewitt's respects to lady Minikin, and 'Miss Tittup; hopes to have the pleasure of at-'tending them to lady Filligree's ball this even-'ing—Lady Daisy sees masks.' We'll certainly attend her—Gymp, put some message-cards upon my toilet, I'll send an answer immediately; and tell one of my footmen, that he must make some visits for me to-day again, and send me a list of those he made yesterday: he must be sure to call at lady Pettitoes, and if she should unluckily be at home, he must say that he came to enquire after her sprained ankle.

Miss Tit. Ay, ay, give our compliments to her sprained ankle.

Lady Min. That woman's so fat, she'll never get well of it, and I am resolved not to call at her door myself, till I am sure of not finding her at home. I am horribly low spirited to-day! do send your colonel to play at chess with me—since he belonged to you, Titty, I have taken a kind of liking to him; I like every thing that loves my Titty. [*Kisses her.*

Miss Tit. I know you do, my dear lady!

[*Kisses her.*

Lady Min. That sneer I don't like; if she suspects, I shall hate her! [*Aside.*] Well, dear Titty, I'll go and write my cards, and dress for the masquerade; and, if that won't raise my spirits, you must assist me to plague my lord a little. [*Exit.*

Miss Tit. Yes, and I'll plague my lady a little, or I am much mistaken. My lord shall know every tittle that has passed: what a poor, blind, half-witted, self-conceited creature this dear friend and relation of mine is! and what a fine, spirited, gallant soldier my colonel is! My lady Minikin likes him, he likes my fortune; my lord likes me, and I like my lord; however, not so much as he imagines, or to play the fool so rashly as he may expect; she must be very silly indeed, who can't flutter about the flame, without burning her wings. What a great revolution in this family in the space of fifteen months!—We went out of England, a very awkward, regular, good English family; but half a year in France, and a winter passed in the warmer cli-

mate of Italy, have ripened our minds to every refinement of ease, dissipation, and pleasure.

Enter COLONEL TIVY.

Col. Tivy. May I hope, madam, that your humble servant had some share in your last reverie?

Miss Tit. How is it possible to have the least knowledge of colonel Tivy, and not make him the principal object of one's reflections?

Col. Tivy. That man must have very little feeling and taste, who is not proud of a place in the thoughts of the finest woman in Europe.

Miss Tit. O fye, colonel! [*Curtsies, and blushes.*

Col. Tivy. By my honour, madam, I mean what I say!

Miss Tit. By your honour, colonel! why will you pass off your counters to me? don't I know that you fine gentlemen regard no honour but that which is given at the gaming table, and which indeed ought to be the only honour you should make free with?

Col. Tivy. How can you, miss, treat me so cruelly? have I not absolutely forsworn dice, mistresses, every thing, since I dared to offer myself to you?

Miss Tit. Yes, colonel; and when I dare to receive you, you may return to every thing again, and not violate the laws of the present happy matrimonial establishment.

Col. Tivy. Give me but your consent, madam, and your life to come——

Miss Tit. Do you get my consent, colonel, and I'll take care of my life to come.

Col. Tivy. How shall I get your consent?

Miss Tit. By getting me in the humour.

Col. Tiv. But how to get you in the humour?

Miss Tit. O, there are several ways; I am very good-natured.

Col. Tivy. Are you in the humour now?

Miss Tit. Try me.

Col. Tivy. How shall I?

Miss Tit. How shall I!—you a soldier, and not know the art military?—how shall I!—I'll tell you how—when you have a subtle, treacherous, politic enemy to deal with, never stand shilly-shally, and lose your time in treaties and parlies, but cock your hat, draw your sword—march, beat drum—dub, dub adub—present, fire, pifl, pauff—'tis done! they fly, they yield—Victoria! Victoria!— [*Running off.*

Col. Tivy. Stay, stay, my dear, dear angel! [*Bringing her back.*

Miss Tit. No, no, no, I have no time to be killed now; besides, lady Minikin is in the vapours, and wants you at chess, and my lord is low-spirited, and wants me at picquet; my uncle is in an ill humour, and wants me to discard you, and go with him into the country.

Col. Tivy. And will you, miss?

Miss Tit. Will I!—no, I never do as I am bid: but you ought—so, go to my lady.

Col. Tivy. Nay, but, miss——

Miss Tit. Nay, but, colonel, if you won't obey your commanding officer you should be broke, and then my maid won't accept of you; so march, colonel!—look'e, sir, I will command before marriage, and do what I please afterwards, or I have been well educated to very little purpose.

[*Exit* MISS TITTUP.

Col. Tivy. What a mad devil it is!—Now, if I had the least affection for the girl, I should be damnably vext at this!—but she has a fine fortune, and I must have her if I can—Tol, lol, lol, &c. [*Exit singing.*

Enter SIR JOHN TROTLEY *and* DAVY.

Sir John. Hold your tongue, Davy; you talk like a fool!

Davy. It is a fine place, your honour, and I could live here for ever.

Sir John. More shame for you—live here for ever!—what, among thieves and pickpockets!—What a revolution since my time! the more I see, the more I've cause for lamentation; what a dreadful change has time brought about in twenty years! I should not have known the place again, nor the people—all the signs, that made so noble an appearance, are all taken down—not a bob or tye-wig to be seen! all the degrees, from the parade in St James's Park, to the stool and brush at the corner of every street, have their hair tied up—the mason laying bricks, the baker with his basket, the post-boy crying newspapers, and the doctors prescribing physic, have all their hair tied up! and that's the reason so many heads are tied up every month.

Davy. I shall have my head tied up to-morrow; Mr Wisp will do it for me—your honour and I look like Philistines among them.

Sir John. And I shall break your head if it is tied up! I hate innovations: all confusion, and no distinction!—the streets now are as smooth as a turnpike road! no rattling and exercise in the hackney-coaches; those who ride in them are all fast asleep; and they have strings in their hands, that the coachman must pull to wake them, when they are to be set down—what luxury and abomination!

Davy. Is it so, your honour?—'feckins, I like it hugely!

Sir John. But you must hate and detest London.

Davy. How can I manage that, your honour, when there is every thing to delight my eye, and cherish my heart?

Sir John. 'Tis all deceit and delusion!

Davy. Such crowding, coaching, carting, and squeezing! such a power of fine sights! fine shops full of fine things! and then such fine illuminations all of a row! and such fine, dainty

ladies in the streets, so civil and so graceless!—they talk of country girls! these here look more healthy and rosy by half.

Sir John. Sirrah, they are prostitutes, and are civil to delude and destroy you: they are painted Jezabels! and they who hearken to them, like Jezabel of old, will go to the dogs! if you dare to look at them, you will be tainted; and if you speak to them, you are undone.

Davy. Bless us, bless us!—how does your honour know all this!—were they as bad in your time?

Sir John. Not by half, Davy—In my time there was a sort of decency in the worst of women; but the harlots, now, watch like tygers for their prey, and drag you to their dens of infamy—See, Davy, how they have torn my neckcloth! [*Shews his neckcloth.*

Davy. If you had gone civilly, your honour, they would not have hurt you.

Sir John. Well, we'll get away as fast as we can.

Davy. Not this month, I hope, for I have not had half my belly-full yet.

Sir John. I'll knock you down, Davy, if you grow profligate; you sha'nt go out again to-night, and to-morrow keep in my room, and stay till I can look over my things, and see they don't cheat you.

Davy. Your honour, then, won't keep your word with me? [*Sulkily.*

Sir John. Why, what did I promise you?

Davy. That I should take sixpen'oth of one of the theatres to-night, and a shilling-place at the other to-morrow.

Sir John. Well, well, so I did: is it a moral piece, Davy?

Davy. O yes, and written by a clergyman; it is called the Rival Cannanites, or the Tragedy of Bragadocia.

Sir John. Be a good lad, and I won't be worse than my word; there's money for you—[*Gives him some.*] but come strait home, for I shall want to go to bed.

Davy. To be sure, your honour—as I am to go soon, I'll make a night of it.

[*Aside, and exit.*

Sir John. This fellow would turn rake and maccaroni if he was to stay here a week longer—Bless me, what dangers are in this town at every step! O, that I were once settled safe again at Trotley Place! nothing but to save my country should bring me back again. My niece Lucretia is so be-fashioned and be-devilled, that nothing, I fear, can save her; however, to ease my conscience, I must try. But what can be expected from the young women of these times, but sallow looks, wild schemes, saucy words, and loose morals! They lie a-bed all day, sit up all night; if they are silent, they are gaming; and, if they talk, 'tis either scandal or infidelity; and that they may look what they are, their heads are all feather, and round their necks are twisted rattlesnake tippets—O tempora, O mores!

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

LORD MINIKIN *discovered in his powdering-gown, with* JESSAMY *and* MIGNON.

Lord Min. Prithee, Mignon, don't plague me any more! dost think that a nobleman's head has nothing to do but be tortured all day under thy infernal fingers? give me my cloaths.

Mig. Ven you loss your monee, my lor, you no goot humour; the devil may dress your cheveau for me! [*Exit.*

Lord Min. That fellow's an impudent rascal! but he's a genius, so I must bear with him. Our beef and pudding enriches their blood so much, that the slaves in a month forget their misery and soup-maigre——O, my head! a chair, Jessamy! I must absolutely change my wine-merchant: I can't taste his champaigne without disordering myself for a week! heigho——

[*Sighs.*

Enter MISS TITTUP.

Miss Tit. What makes you sigh, my lord?

Lord Min. Because you were so near me, child.

Miss Tit. Indeed!——I should rather have thought my lady had been with you—by your looks, my lord, I am afraid fortune jilted you last night.

Lord Min. No, faith! our champaigne was not good yesterday, and I am vapoured like our English November; but one glance of my Tittup can dispel vapours like—like———

Miss Tit. Like something very fine to be sure; but pray keep your simile for the next time; and hark'e—a little prudence will not be amiss; Mr Jessamy will think you mad, and me worse.

[*Half aside.*

Jes. O, pray don't mind me, madam.

Lord Min. Gadso, Jessamy, look out my domino, and I'll ring the bell when I want you.

Jes. I shall, my lord. Miss thinks that every body is blind in the house but herself.

[*Aside, and exit.*

Miss Tit. Upon my word, my lord, you must be a little more prudent, or we shall become the town-talk.

Lord Min. And so I will, my dear! and, therefore, to prevent surprise, I'll lock the door.

Miss Tit. What do you mean, my lord?

Lord Min. Prudence, child, prudence! I keep all my jewels under lock and key.

Miss Tit. You are not in possession, yet, my lord: I can't stay two minutes; I only came to tell you, that lady Minikin saw us yesterday in the hackney-coach; she did not know me, I be-

lieve. She pretends to be greatly uneasy at your neglect of her; she certainly has some mischief in her head.

Lord Min. No intentions, I hope, of being fond of me?

Miss Tit. No, no; make yourself easy; she hates you most unalterably.

Lord Min. You have given me spirits again.

Miss Tit. Her pride is alarmed, that you should prefer any of the sex to her.

Lord Min. Her pride then has been alarmed, ever since I had the honour of knowing her.

Miss Tit. But, dear my lord, let us be merry and wise; should she ever be convinced, that we have a *tendre* for each other, she certainly would proclaim it, and then———

Lord Min. We should be envied, and she would be laught at, my sweet cousin.

Miss Tit. Nay, I would have her mortified, too; for, though I love her ladyship sincerely, I cannot say but I love a little mischief as sincerely; but, then, if my uncle Trotley should know of our affairs, he is so old-fashioned, prudish, and out-of-the-way, he would either strike me out of his will, or insist upon my quitting the house.

Lord Min. My good cousin is a queer mortal, that's certain; I wish we could get him handsomely into the country again—he has a fine fortune to leave behind him———

Miss Tit. But, then, he lives so regularly, and never makes use of a physician, that he may live these twenty years.

Lord Min. What can we do with the barbarian?

Miss Tit. I don't know what's the matter with me, but I am really in fear of him: I suppose reading his formal books, when I was in the country with him, and going so constantly to church, with my elbows stuck to my hips, and my toes turned in, has given me these foolish prejudices.

Lord Min. Then, you must affront him, or you'll never get the better of him.

[SIR JOHN TROTLEY *knocking at the door.*

Sir John. My lord, my lord, are you busy?

[*My lord goes to the door softly.*

Miss Tit. Heavens! 'tis that detestable brute, my uncle!

Lord Min. That horrid dog, my cousin!

Miss Tit. What shall we do, my lord?

[*Softly.*

Sir John. [*At the door.*] Nay, my lord, my lord, I heard you! pray let me speak with you?

Lord Min. Ho, sir John, is it you? I beg your pardon; I'll put up my papers, and open the door.

Miss Tit. Stay, stay, my lord! I would not meet him now for the world; if he sees me here, alone with you, he'll rave like a madman; put me up the chimney: any where!

[*Alarmed.*

Lord Min. [*Aloud.*] I'm coming, sir John!—here, here, get behind my great chair! he shan't see you, and you may see all; I'll be short and pleasant with him.

[*Puts her behind the chair, and opens the door.*]

Enter SIR JOHN.

[*During this scene, my lord turns the chair, as* SIR JOHN *moves, to conceal* TITTUP.

Sir John. You'll excuse me, my lord, that I have broken in upon you; I heard you talking pretty loud; what, have you nobody with you? what were you about, cousin?

[*Looking about.*

Lord Min. A particular affair, sir John; I always lock myself up to study my speeches, and speak them aloud for the sake of the tone and action.

Sir John. Ay, ay, it is the best way; I'm sorry I disturbed you; you will excuse me, cousin!

Lord Min. I am rather obliged to you, sir John; intense application to these things ruins my health; but one must do it for the sake of the nation.

Sir John. May be so, and I hope the nation will be the better for it—you'll excuse me!

Lord Min. Excuse you, sir John! I love your frankness; but why won't you be franker still? we have always something for dinner, and you will never dine at home.

Sir John. You must know, my lord, that I love to know what I eat; I hate to travel, where I don't know my way; and since you have brought in foreign fashions and figaries, every thing and every body are in masquerade; your men and manners too, are as much frittered and fricaseed, as your beef and mutton; I love a plain dish, my lord.

Miss Tit. I wish I was out of the room, or he at the bottom of the Thames.

[*Peeping.*

Sir John. But to the point. I came, my lord, to open my mind to you about my niece Tittup; shall I do it freely?

Miss Tit. Now for it!

Lord Min. The freer the better; Tittup's a fine girl, cousin, and deserves all the kindness you can show her.

[LORD MINIKIN *and* TITTUP *make signs at each other.*

Sir John. She must deserve it though, before she shall have it; and I would have her begin with lengthening her petticoats, covering her shoulders, and wearing a cap upon her head.

Miss Tit. O, frightful! [*Aside.*

Lord Min. Don't you think a taper leg, falling shoulders, and fine hair, delightful objects, sir John?

Sir John. And, therefore, ought to be concealed; 'tis their interest to conceal them. When you take from the men the pleasure of imagination, there will be a scarcity of husbands; and then taper legs, falling shoulders, and fine hair, may be had for nothing.

Lord Min. Well said, sir John! ha, ha, ha! your niece shall wear a horseman's coat and jack-boots to please you—ha, ha, ha!

Sir John. You may sneer, my lord; but, for all that, I think my niece in a bad way; she must leave me and the country, forsooth, to see good company and fashions; I have seen them too, and wish from my heart, that she is not much worse for her journey—you'll excuse me!

Lord Min. But why in a passion, sir John?—[*My lord nods and laughs at* MISS TITTUP, *who peeps from behind.*] Don't you think, that my lady and I shall be able and willing to put her into the road?

Sir John. Zounds, my lord, you are out of it yourself! This comes of your travelling; all the town know how you and my lady live together; and I must tell you—you'll excuse me! that my niece suffers by the bargain. Prudence, my lord, is a very fine thing.

Lord Min. So is a long neckcloth nicely twisted into a button-hole; but I don't chuse to wear one—you'll excuse me!

Sir John. I wish that he, who first changed long neckcloths for such things as you wear, had the wearing of a twisted neckcloth, that I would give him.

Lord Min. Prithee, baronet, don't be so so horridly out of the way! Prudence is a very vulgar virtue, and so incompatible with our present ease and refinement, that a prudent man of fashion is now as great a miracle as a pale woman of quality; we got rid of our *mauvais honte*, at the time we imported our neighbours' rouge, and their morals.

Sir John. Did you ever hear the like? I am not surprised, my lord, that you think so lightly, and talk so vainly, who are so polite a husband; your lady, my cousin, is a fine woman, and brought you a fine fortune, and deserves better usage.

Lord Min. Will you have her, sir John? she is very much at your service.

Sir John. Profligate! What did you marry her for, my lord?

Lord Min. Convenience——Marriage is not, now-a-days, an affair of inclination, but convenience; and they, who marry for love, and such old-fashioned stuff, are to me as ridiculous as those, who advertise for an agreeable companion in a post-chaise.

Sir John. I have done, my lord! Miss Tittup shall either return with me into the country, or not a penny shall she have from sir John Trotley, baronet. [*Whistles and walks about.*

Miss Tit. I am frightened out of my wits!

[LORD MINIKIN *sings, and sits down.*

Sir John. Pray, my lord, what husband is this you have provided for her?

Lord Min. A friend of mine; a man of wit and a fine gentleman.

Sir John. May be so, and yet make a damned husband for all that—You'll excuse me!—What estate has he, pray?

Lord Min. He's a colonel; his elder brother, sir Tan Tivy, will certainly break his neck; and then my friend will be a happy man.

Sir John. Here's morals! a happy man, when his brother has broke his neck!—a happy man!—mercy on me!

Lord Min. Why, he'll have six thousand a-year, sir John!

Sir John. I don't care what he'll have, nor don't care what he is, nor who my niece marries; she is a fine lady, and let her have a fine gentleman: I shan't hinder her. I'll away into the country to-morrow, and leave you to your fine doings; I have no relish for them, not I; I can't live among you, nor eat with you, nor game with you; I hate cards and dice; I will neither rob, nor be robbed; I am contented with what I have; and am very happy, my lord, though my brother has not broke his neck—You'll excuse me!

[*Exit.*

Lord Min. Ha, ha, ha! Come, fox; come out of your hole! Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Tit. Indeed, my lord, you have undone me; not a foot shall I have of Trotley manor—that's positive!—But no matter; there's no danger of his breaking his neck; so, I'll e'en make myself happy with what I have, and behave to him for the future, as if he was a poor relation.

Lord Min. [*Kneeling, snatching her hand, and kissing it.*] I must kneel, and adore you for your spirit, my sweet, heavenly Lucretia!

Re-enter SIR JOHN.

Sir John. One thing I had forgot— [*Starts.*

Miss Tit. Ha! he's here again!

Sir John. Why, what the devil!—heigho!—my niece Lucretia, and my virtuous lord, studying speeches for the good of the nation!—Yes, yes, you have been making fine speeches, indeed, my lord! and your arguments have prevailed, I see! I beg your pardon, I did not mean to interrupt your studies—you'll excuse me, my lord!

Lord Min. [*Smiling, and mocking him.*] You'll excuse me, sir John!

Sir John. O yes, my lord; but I'm afraid the devil won't excuse you at the proper time!—Miss Lucretia, how do you, child? You are to be married soon—I wish the gentleman joy; Miss Lucretia, he is a happy man, to be sure, and will want nothing but the breaking of his brother's neck to be completely so!

Miss Tit. Upon my word, uncle, you are always putting bad constructions upon things; my lord has been soliciting me to marry his friend—and having that moment—extorted a consent from me—he was thanking—and—and—wishing me joy—in his foolish manner—— [*Hesitating.*

Sir John. Is that all?—But how came you here, child? did you fly down the chimney, or in at the window? for I don't remember seeing you, when I was here before.

Miss Tit. How can you talk so, sir John?—You really confound me with your suspicions; and then, you ask so many questions, and I have so many things to do, that—that—upon my word, if I don't make haste, I shan't get my dress ready for the ball; so I must run—You'll excuse me, uncle! [*Exit running.*

Sir John. A fine hopeful young lady that, my lord?

Lord Min. She's well bred, and has wit.

Sir John. She has wit and breeding enough to laugh at her relations, and bestow favours on your lordship! but, I must tell you plainly, my lord—you'll excuse me—that your marrying your lady, my cousin, to use her ill, and sending for my niece, your cousin, to debauch her——

Lord Min. You're warm, sir John, and don't know the world, and I never contend with ignorance and passion; live with me some time, and you'll be satisfied of my honour and good intentions to you and your family. In the mean time, command my house; I must away immediately to lady Filligree's—and I am sorry you won't make one with us.—Here, Jessamy, give me my domino, and call a chair; and don't let my uncle want for any thing—You'll excuse me, sir John; tol, lol, derol, &c. [*Exit singing.*

Sir John. The world's at an end!—here's fine work! here are precious doings! This lord is a pillar of the state, too! no wonder that the building is in danger with such rotten supporters!—heigh ho!—And then my poor lady Minikin, what a friend and husband she is blessed with! let me consider!—Should I tell the good woman of these pranks? I may only make more mischief, and, mayhap, go near to kill her; for she's as tender as she's virtuous—Poor lady! I'll e'en go and comfort her directly, and endeavour to draw her from the wickedness of this town into the country, where she shall have reading, fowling, and fishing, to keep up her spirits; and, when I die, I will leave her that part of my fortune, with which I intended to reward the virtues of Miss Lucretia Tittup, with a plague to her! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—LADY MINIKIN'S *apartment.*

LADY MINIKIN *and* COLONEL TIVY *discovered.*

Lady Min. Don't urge it, colonel! I can't think of coming home from the masquerade this evening. Though I should pass for my niece, it would make an uproar among the servants; and, perhaps, from the mistake, break off your match with Tittup.

Col. Tivy. My dear lady Minikin, you know my marriage with your niece is only a secondary consideration; my first and principal object is you—you, madam!—therefore, my dear lady, give me your promise to leave the ball with me. You must, lady Minikin; a bold young fellow, and a soldier as I am, ought not to be kept from plunder, when the town has capitulated!

Lady Min. But it has not capitulated, and, perhaps, never will; however, colonel, since you are so furious, I must come to terms, I think—Keep your eyes upon me at the ball—I think I may expect that—and when I drop my handkerchief, 'tis your signal for pursuing; I shall get home as fast as I can, you may follow me as fast as you can; my lord and Tittup will be otherwise employed: Gymp will let us in the back way—No, no, my heart misgives me!

Col. Tivy. Then I am miserable!

Lady Min. Nay, rather than you should be miserable, colonel, I will indulge your martial spirit; meet me in the field; there's my gauntlet. [*Throws down her glove.*

Col. Tivy. [*Seizing it.*] Thus I accept your sweet challenge; and, if I fail you, may I, hereafter, both in love and war, be branded with the name of coward! [*Kneels, and kisses her hand.*

Enter SIR JOHN, *opening the door.*

Sir John. May I presume, cousin—

Lady Min. Ha! [*Spunks.*

Sir John. Mercy upon us, what are we at now! [*Looks astonished.*

Lady Min. How can you be so rude, sir John, to come into a lady's room without first knocking at the door? you have frightened me out of my wits!

Sir John. I am sure you have frightened me out of mine!

Col. Tivy. Such rudeness deserves death!

Sir John. Death, indeed! for I never shall recover myself again—All pigs of the same sty! all studying for the good of the nation!

Lady Min. We must sooth him, and not provoke him. [*Half aside to the* COLONEL.

Col. Tivy. I would cut his throat, if you'd permit me. [*Aside to* LADY MINIKIN.

Sir John. The devil has got his hoof in the house, and has corrupted the whole family! I'll get out of it as fast as I can, lest he should lay hold of me, too! [*Going.*

Lady Min. Sir John, I must insist upon your not going away in a mistake.

Sir John. No mistake, my lady; I am thoroughly convinced—Mercy on me!

Lady Min. I must beg you, sir John, not to

make any wrong constructions upon this accident! you must know, that the moment you was at the door—I had promised the colonel no longer to be his enemy in his designs upon Miss Tittup—this threw him into such a rapture—that, upon my promising my interest with you—and wishing him joy—he fell upon his knees, and—and—[*Laughing.*]—Ha, ha, ha!

Col. Tivy. Ha, ha, ha! yes, yes, I fell upon my knees—and—and——

Sir John. Ay, ay, fell upon your knees, and—and—ha, ha!—A very good joke, faith! and the best of it is, that they are wishing joy all over the house, upon the same occasion!—and my lord is wishing joy; and I wish him joy, and you, with all my heart!

Lady Min. Upon my word, sir John, your cruel suspicions affect me strongly; and, though my resentment is curbed by my regard, my tears cannot be restrained; 'tis the only resource my innocence has left. [*Exit, crying.*

Col. Tivy. I reverence you, sir, as a relation to that lady; but, as her slanderer, I detest you: Her tears must be dried, and my honour satisfied; you know what I mean; take your choice—time, place, sword, or pistol; consider it calmly, and determine as you please. I am a soldier, sir John! [*Exit.*

Sir John. Very fine, truly! and so, between the crocodile and the bully, my throat is to be cut! They are guilty of all sorts of iniquity; and, when they are discovered, no humility, no repentance!—The ladies have recourse to their tongues or their tears, and the gallants to their swords!—That I may not be drawn in by the one, or drawn upon by the other, I'll hurry into the country, while I retain my senses, and can sleep in a whole skin! [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter SIR JOHN *and* JESSAMY.

Sir John. THERE is no bearing this! what a land are we in! Upon my word, Mr Jessamy, you should look well to the house; there are certainly rogues about it; for I did but cross the way just now to the pamphlet-shop, to buy a Touch of the Times, and they have taken my hanger from my side; ay, and had a pluck at my watch, too; but I heard of their tricks, and had it sewed to my pocket.

Jes. Don't be alarmed, sir John; 'tis a very common thing; and, if you walk the streets without convoy, you will be picked up by privateers of all kinds—Ha, ha!

Sir John. Not be alarmed, when I'm robbed! why, they might have cut my throat with my own hanger! I shan't sleep a wink all night; so, pray lend me some weapon of defence; for I am sure, if they attack me in the open street, they'll be with me at night again.

Jes. I'll lend you my own sword, sir John: be assured there's no danger; there's robbing and murder cried every night under my window; but it no more disturbs me, than the ticking of my watch at my bed's head.

Sir John. Well, well, be that as it will, I must be upon my guard. What a dreadful place this is! but 'tis all owing to the corruption of the times; the great folks game, and the poor folks rob; no wonder that murder ensues—sad, sad, sad! Well, let me but get over to-night, and I'll leave this den of thieves to-morrow—How long will your lord and lady stay at this masking and mummery, before they come home?

Jes. 'Tis impossible to say the time, sir; that merely depends upon the spirits of the company, and the nature of the entertainment: for my own part, I generally make it myself till four or five in the morning.

Sir John. Why, what the devil, do you make one at these masqueradings!

Jes. I seldom miss, sir; I may venture to say, that nobody knows the trim and small talk of the place better than I do; I was always reckoned an incomparable mask.

Sir John. Thou art an incomparable coxcomb, I am sure. [*Aside.*

Jes. An odd, ridiculous accident happened to me at a masquerade three years ago; I was in tip-top-spirits, and had drank a little too freely of the champaigne, I believe—

Sir John. You'll be hanged, I believe! [*Aside.*

Jes. Wit flew about—in short, I was in spirits—At last, from drinking and rattling, to vary the pleasure, we went to dancing; and who, do you think, I danced a minuet with? He! he! Pray, guess, sir John!

Sir John. Danced a minuet with! [*Half aside.*

Jes. My own lady, that's all. The eyes of the whole assembly were upon us; my lady dances well, and, I believe, I am pretty tolerable: After the dance, I was running into a little coquettry and small talk with her—

Sir John. With your lady?——Chaos is come again! [*Aside.*

Jes. With my lady—but, upon my turning my hand thus——[*Conceitedly.*]——egad! she caught me; whispered me who I was: I would fain have laughed her out of it; but it would not do—No, no, Jessamy, says she, I am not to be deceived: pray, wear gloves for the future; for you may as well go bare-faced, as show that hand and diamond ring.

Sir John. What a sink of iniquity!—Prostitu-

tion on all sides! from the lord to the pickpocket! [*Aside.*]—Pray, Mr Jessamy, among your other virtues, I suppose you game a little, eh, Mr Jessamy?

Jes. A little whist or so;—but I am tied up from the dice; I must never touch a box again.

Sir John. I wish you was tied up somewhere else.—[*Aside.*] I sweat from top to toe! Pray, lend me your sword, Mr Jessamy; I shall go to my room; and let my lord and lady, and my niece Tittup, know, that I beg they will excuse ceremonies; that I must be up, and gone, before they go to bed; that I have a most profound respect and love for them; and—and—that I hope we shall never see one another again as long as we live!

Jes. I shall certainly obey your commands—What poor ignorant wretches these country gentlemen are! [*Aside, and exit.*

Sir John. If I stay in this place another day, it would throw me into a fever!—Oh!—I wish it was morning!—This comes of visiting my relations!

Enter DAVY, *drunk.*

So, you wicked wretch you—where have you been, and what have you been doing?

Davy. Merry-making, your honour—London for ever!

Sir John. Did I not order you to come directly from the play, and not be idling and raking about?

Davy. Servants don't do what they are bid, in London.

Sir John. And did I not order you not to make a jackanapes of yourself, and tie your hair up like a monkey?

Davy. And therefore I did it—No pleasing the ladies without this—My lord's servants call you an old out-of-fashioned codger, and have taught me what's what.

Sir John. Here's an imp of the devil! he is undone, and will poison the whole country!—Sirrah, get every thing ready; I'll be going directly.

Davy. To bed, sir? I want to go to bed myself, sir.

Sir John. Why, how now—you are drunk, too, sirrah!

Davy. I am a little, your honour; because I have been drinking.

Sir John. That is not all—but you have been in bad company, sirrah!

Davy. Indeed, your honour's mistaken, I never kept such good company in all my life.

Sir John. The fellow does not understand me—Where have you been, you drunkard?

Davy. Drinking, to be sure, if I am a drunkard; and, if you had been drinking, too, as I have been, you would not be in such a passion with a body—it makes one so good-natured.

Sir John. There is another addition to my misfortunes! I shall have this fellow carry into the country as many vices as will corrupt the whole parish!

Davy. I'll take what I can, to be sure, your worship.

Sir John. Get away, you beast you! and sleep off the debauchery you have contracted this fortnight, or I shall leave you behind, as a proper person to make one of his lordship's family.

Davy. So much the better——give me more wages, less work, and the key of the ale cellar, and I am your servant; if not, provide yourself with another. [*Struts about.*

Sir John. Here's a reprobate!—this is the completion of my misery! but hark'ee, villain! go to bed—and sleep off your iniquity, and then pack up the things, or I'll pack you off to Newgate, and transport you for life, you rascal you! [*Exit.*

Davy. That for you, old codger! [*Snaps his fingers.*] I know the law better than to be frightened with moon-shine. I wish that I was to live here all my days—this is life indeed! a servant lives up to his eyes in clover; they have wages, and board wages, and nothing to do, but to grow fat and saucy—they are as happy as their masters; they play for ever at cards, swear like emperors, drink like fishes, and go a wenching with as much ease and tranquillity, as if they were going to a sermon! Oh, 'tis a fine life! [*Exit reeling.*

SCENE IV.—*A chamber in* LORD MINIKIN'S *house.*

Enter LORD MINIKIN *and* MISS TITTUP *in masquerade dresses, lighted by* JESSAMY.

Lord Min. Set down the candles, Jessamy; and should your lady come home, let me know—be sure you are not out of the way.

Jes. I have lived too long with your lordship to need the caution—who the devil have we got now? but that's my lord's business, and not mine. [*Exit.*

Miss Tit. [*Pulling off her mask.*] Upon my word, my lord, this coming home so soon from the masquerade is very imprudent, and will certainly be observed—I am most inconceivably frightened, I can assure you—my uncle Trusty has a light in his room; the accident this morning will certainly keep him upon the watch—pray, my lord, let us defer our meetings till he goes into the country—I find that my English heart, though it has ventured so far, grows fearful, and awkward to practise the freedoms of warmer climes—[*My lord takes her by the hand.*] —If you will not desist, my lord—we are separated for ever! The sight of the precipice turns my head; I have been giddy with it too long, and must turn from it while I can—pray be quiet, my lord! I will meet you to-morrow.

Lord Min. To-morrow! 'tis an age in my

tuation—let the weak, bashful, coyish whiner be intimidated with these faint alarms, but let the bold, experienced lover kindle at the danger, and, like the eagle, in the midst of storms, thus pounce upon his prey. [*Takes hold of her.*

Miss Tit. Dear Mr Eagle, be merciful! pray let the poor pigeon fly for this once.

Lord Min. If I do, my dove, may I be cursed to have my wife as fond of me, as I am now of thee. [*Offers to kiss her.*

Jes. [*Without, knocking at the door.*] My lord, my lord!

Miss Tit. [*Screams.*] Ha!

Lord Min. Who's there!

Jes. [*Peeping.*] 'Tis I, my lord; may I come in?

Lord Min. Damn the fellow! What's the matter?

Jes. Nay, not much, my lord—only my lady's come home.

Miss Tit. Then I'm undone—what shall I do? I'll run into my own room.

Lord Min. Then she may meet you——

Jes. There's a dark, deep closet, my lord; miss may hide herself there.

Miss Tit. For Heaven's sake, put me into it, and when her ladyship's safe, let me know, my lord.—What an escape have I had!

Lord Min. The moment her evil spirit is laid, I'll let my angel out—[*Puts her into the closet.*]—lock the door on the inside—Come softly to my room, Jessamy——

Jes. If a board creaks, your lordship shall never give me a laced waistcoat again.

[*Exeunt on tiptoes.*

Enter GYMP, *lighting in* LADY MINIKIN *and* COLONEL TIVY, *in masquerade dresses.*

Gymp. Pray, my lady, go no farther with the colonel; I know you mean nothing but innocence, but I'm sure there will be bloodshed, for my lord is certainly in the house—I'll take my affadavy that I heard——

Col. Tivy. It can't be, I tell you; we left him this moment at the masquerade; I spoke to him before I came out.

Lady Min. He's too busy, and too well employed to think of home—but don't tremble so, Gymp. There is no harm, I assure you—the colonel is to marry my niece, and it is proper to settle some matters relating to it—they are left to us.

Gymp. Yes, yes, madam, to be sure it is proper, that you talk together—I know you mean nothing but innocence—but, indeed, there will be bloodshed.

Col. Tivy. The girl's a fool! I have no sword by my side.

Gymp. But my lord has, and you may kill one another with that—I know you mean nothing but innocence, but I certainly heard him go up the back stairs into his room, talking with Jessamy.

Lady Min. 'Tis impossible but the girl must have fancied this—Can't you ask Whisp, or Mignon, if their master is come in?

Gymp. Lord, my lady, they are always drunk before this, and asleep in the kitchen.

Lady Min. This frightened fool has made me as ridiculous as herself! hark!—Colonel, I'll swear there is something upon the stairs—now I am in the field, I find I am a coward.

Gymp. There will certainly be bloodshed!

Col. Tivy. I'll slip down with Gymp this back way, then. [*Going.*

Gymp. O dear, my lady, there is something coming up them too!

Col. Tivy. Zounds! I've got between two fires!

Lady Min. Run into the closet.

Col. Tivy. [*Runs to the closet.*] There's no retreat; the door is locked!

Lady Min. Behind the chimney-board, Gymp.

Col. Tivy. I shall certainly be taken prisoner. [*Gets behind the board.*] You'll let me know when the enemy's decamped?

Lady Min. Leave that to me—do you, Gymp, go down the back stairs, and leave me to face my lord; I think I can match him at hypocrisy. [*Sits down.*

Enter LORD MINIKIN.

Lord Min. What, is your ladyship so soon returned from lady Filligree's?

Lady Min. I am sure, my lord, I ought to be more surprised at your being here so soon, when I saw you so well entertained in a *tete-a-tete* with a lady in crimson—such sights, my lord, will always drive me from my most favourite amusements.

Lord Min. You find, at least, that the lady, whoever she was, could not engage me to stay, when I found your ladyship had left the ball.

Lady Min. Your lordship's sneering upon my unhappy temper may be a proof of your wit, but it is none of your humanity; and this behaviour is as great an insult upon me, as even your falsehood itself. [*Pretends to weep.*

Lord Min. Nay, my dear lady Minikin, if you are resolved to play tragedy, I shall roar away too, and pull out my cambric handkerchief.

Lady Min. I think, my lord, we had better retire to our apartments; my weakness and your brutality will only expose us to our servants—— Where is Tittup, pray?

Lord Min. I left her with the colonel——a masquerade to young folks, upon the point of matrimony, is as delightful as it is disgusting to those who are happily married, and are wise enough to love home, and the company of their wives. [*Takes hold of her hand.*

Lady Min. False man! I had as lieve a toad touched me. [*Aside.*

Lord Min. She gives me the frisson—I must propose to stay, or I shall never get rid of her. [*Aside.*]—I am aguish to-night—he—he—do, my dear, let us make a little fire here, and have a family *tete-a-tete*, by way of novelty.

[*Rings a bell.*

Enter JESSAMY.

Let them take away that chimney-board, and light a fire here immediately.

Lady Min. What shall I do? [*Aside, and greatly alarmed.*]—Here, Jessamy, there is no occasion; I am going to my own chamber, and my lord won't stay here by himself.

[*Exit* JESSAMY.

Lord Min. How cruel it is, lady Minikin, to deprive me of the pleasure of a domestic duetto ——A good escape, faith! [*Aside.*

Lady Min. I have too much regard for lord Minikin, to agree to any thing that would afford him so little pleasure—I shall retire to my own apartment.

Lord Min. Well, if your ladyship will be cruel, I must still, like the miser, starve and sigh, though possessed of the greatest treasure. [*Bows.*] I wish your ladyship a good night——

[*He takes one candle, and* LADY MINIKIN *the other.*

May I presume——— [*Salutes her.*

Lady Min. Your lordship is too obliging—— nasty man! [*Aside.*

Lord Min. Disagreeable woman! [*Aside.*

[*They wipe their lips, and exeunt different ways, ceremoniously.*

Miss Tit. [*Peeping out of the closet.*] All's silent now, and quite dark; what has been doing here, I cannot guess—I long to be relieved; I wish my lord was come—but I hear a noise!

[*She shuts the door.*

Col. Tivy. [*Peeping over the chimney-board.*] I wonder my lady does not come—I would not have miss Tittup know of this—'twould be ten thousand pounds out of my way, and I can't afford to give so much for a little gallantry.

Miss Tit. [*Comes forward.*] What would my colonel say, to find his bride, that is to be, in this critical situation!

Enter LORD MINIKIN *at one door, in the dark.*

Lord Min. Now to release my prisoner.

[*Comes forward.*

Enter LADY MINIKIN *at the other door.*

Lady Min. My poor colonel will be as miserable, as if he were besieged in garrison; I must release him. [*Going towards the chimney.*

Lord Min. Hist! hist!

Miss Tit. Lady Min. and Col. Tivy. Here! here!

Lord Min. This way.

Lady Min. Softly.

[*They all grope till* LORD MINIKIN *has got* LADY MINIKIN, *and the* COLONEL, MISS TITTUP.

Sir John. [*Speaks without.*] Lights this way, I say! I am sure there are thieves; get a blunderbuss!

Jes. Indeed you dreamt it; there is nobody but the family. [*All stand and stare.*

Enter SIR JOHN, *in his night-cap, and hanger drawn, with* JESSAMY.

Sir John. Give me the candle, I'll ferret them out, I warrant; bring a blunderbuss, I say! they have been skipping about that gallery in the dark this half hour; there must be mischief—I have watched them in this room—ho, ho, are you there? If you stir, you are dead men—[*They retire.*]—and [*Seeing the ladies.*] women, too!—egad—ha! what's this? the same party again! and two couple they are of as choice mortals as ever were hatched in this righteous town—you'll excuse me, cousins!

[*They all look confounded.*

Lord Min. In the name of wonder, how comes all this about?

Sir John. Well, but hark'e, my dear cousins, have you not got wrong partners?—here has been some mistake in the dark; I am mighty glad that I have brought you a candle to set all to rights again—you'll excuse me, gentlemen and ladies!

Enter GYMP, *with a candle.*

Gymp. What, in the name of mercy, is the matter?

Sir John. Why, the old matter, and the old game, Mrs Gymp; and I'll match my cousins here at it against all the world, and I say done first.

Lord Min. What is the meaning, sir John, of all this tumult and consternation? may not lady Minikin and I, and the colonel and your niece, be seen in my house together, without your raising the family, and making this uproar and confusion?

Sir John. Come, come, good folks, I see you are all confounded; I'll settle this matter in a moment. As for you, colonel—though you have not deserved plain dealing from me, I will now be serious—you imagine this young lady has an independent fortune, besides expectations from me. 'Tis a mistake. She has no expectations from me, if she marry you; and if I don't consent to her marriage, she will have no fortune at all.

Col. Tivy. Plain dealing is a jewel; and to shew you, sir John, that I can pay you in kind, I am most sincerely obliged to you for your intelli-

gence; and I am, ladies, your most obedient humble servant———I shall see you, my lord, at the club to-morrow?

[*Exit.*

Lord Min. *Sans doute, mon cher colonel*——I'll meet you there without fail.

Sir John. My lord, you'll have something else to do.

Lord Min. Indeed! what is that, good sir John?

Sir John. You must meet your lawyers and creditors to-morrow, and be told what you have always turned a deaf ear to———that the dissipation of your fortune and morals must be followed by years of parsimony and repentance. As you are fond of going abroad, you may indulge that inclination without having it in your power to indulge any other.

Lord Min. The bumpkin is no fool, and is damned satirical! [*Aside.*

Sir John. This kind of quarantine for pestilential minds will bring you to your senses, and make you renounce foreign vices and follies, and return with joy to your country and property again.———read that, my lord, and know your fate. [*Gives a paper.*

Lord Min. What an abomination is this! that a man of fashion, and a nobleman, shall be obliged to submit to the laws of his country!

Sir John. Thank Heaven, my lord, we are in that country! You are silent, ladies; if repentance has subdued your tongues, I shall have hopes of you; a little country air might perhaps do well; as you are distressed, I am at your service; what say you, my lady?

Lady Min. However appearances have condemned me, give me leave to disavow the substance of those appearances. My mind has been tainted, but not profligate———your kindness and example may restore me to my former natural English constitution.

Sir John. Will you resign your lady to me, my lord, for a time?

Lord Min. For ever, dear sir John, without a murmur.

Sir John. Well, miss, and what say you?

Miss Tit. Guilty, uncle.

[*Curtsying.*

Sir John. Guilty! the devil you are? of what?

Miss Tit. Of consenting to marry one, whom my heart does not approve, and coquetting with another, which friendship, duty, honour, morals, and every thing, but fashion, ought to have forbidden.

Sir John. Thus, then, with the wife of one under this arm, and the mistress of another under this, I sally forth a knight errant, to rescue distressed damsels from those monsters, foreign vices, and Bon Ton, as they call it; and I trust that every English hand and heart here will assist me in so desperate an undertaking. You'll excuse me, sirs!

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THREE WEEKS AFTER MARRIAGE.

BY

MURPHY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
Sir Charles Racket, *a man of fashion.*	Lady Racket, *wife to* Sir Charles Racket
Drugget, *father to* Lady Racket.	Mrs Drugget, *wife to* Drugget.
Lovelace, *friend to* Sir Charles Racket.	Nancy, *her daughter.*
Woodley, *attached to* Nancy.	Dimity, *maid to* Mrs Drugget.
	Servants, &c.

Scene—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter Woodley *and* Dimity.

Dim. Pho, pho! no such thing!—I tell you, Mr Woodley, you are a mere novice in these affairs!

Wood. Nay, but listen to reason, Mrs Dimity; has not your master, Mr Drugget, invited me down to his country-seat, in order to give me his daughter Nancy in marriage? and with what pretence can he now break off?

Dim. What pretence!—you put a body out of all patience—But go on your own way, sir; my advice is all lost upon you.

Wood. You do me injustice, Mrs Dimity—your advice has governed my whole conduct—Have not I fixed an interest in the young lady's heart?

Dim. An interest in a fiddlestick! you ought to have made love to the father and mother—what, do you think the way to get a wife, at this time of day, is by speaking fine things to the lady you have a fancy for?—That was the practice, indeed; but things are altered now—you must address the old people, sir; and never trouble your head about your mistress—None of your letters, and verses, and soft looks, and fine speeches—'Have compassion, thou angelic creature, on a poor dying'—Pshaw! stuff! nonsense! all out of fashion—go your ways to the old curmudgeon; humour his whims——'I shall esteem it an honour, sir, to be allied to a gentleman of your rank and taste.' 'Upon my word, he's a pretty young gentleman.' Then, wheel about to the mother: 'Your daughter, madam, is the very model of you, and I shall adore her for your sake.' 'Here, come hither, Nancy, take this gentleman for better or worse.' 'La, mamma, I can never consent.'——'I should not have thought of your consent—the consent of your relations is enough: why, how now, hussy!' So, away you go to church, the knot is tied, an agreeable honey-moon follows, the charm is then dissolved; you go to all the clubs in St James's street: your lady goes to the Coterie; and, in a little time, you both go to Doctor's Commons; and, if faults

on both sides prevent a divorce, you'll quarrel like contrary elements all the rest of your lives: that's the way of the world now.

Wood. But you know, my dear Dimity, the old couple have received every mark of attention from me.

Dim. Attention! to be sure you did not fall asleep in their company; but what then? You should have entered into their characters, played with their humours, and sacrificed to their absurdities.

Wood. But if my temper is too frank——

Dim. Frank, indeed! yes, you have been frank enough to ruin yourself. Have you not to do with a rich old shopkeeper, retired from business with an hundred thousand pounds in his pocket, to enjoy the dust of the London road, which he calls living in the country—and yet you must find fault with his situation! What if he has made a ridiculous gimcrack of his house and gardens, you know his heart is set upon it; and could not you commend his taste? But you must be too frank! Those walks and alleys are too regular—those evergreens should not be cut into such fantastic shapes! And thus you advise a poor old mechanic, who delights in every thing that's monstrous, to follow nature—Oh, you are likely to be a successful lover!

Wood. But why should I not save a father-in-law from being a laughing stock?

Dim. Make him your father-in-law first.

Wood. Why, he can't open his windows for the dust—he stands all day looking through a pane of glass at the carts and stage-coaches as they pass by; and he calls that living in the fresh air, and enjoying his own thoughts!

Dim. And could not you let him go on in his own way? You have ruined yourself by talking sense to him; and all your nonsense to the daughter won't make amends for it. And then the mother; how have you played your cards in that quarter?—She wants a tinsel man of fashion for her second daughter—'Don't you see,' (says she) 'how happy my eldest girl is made by marrying sir Charles Racket? She has been married three entire weeks, and not so much as one angry word has passed between them—— Nancy shall have a man of quality, too!'

Wood. And yet I know sir Charles Racket perfectly well.

Dim. Yes, so do I; and I know he'll make his lady wretched at last. But what then? You should have humoured the old folks; you should have been a talking, empty fop, to the good old lady; and to the old gentleman, an admirer of his taste in gardening. But you have lost him: he is grown fond of this beau Lovelace, who is here in the house with him; the coxcomb ingratiates himself by flattery, and you are undone by frankness!

Wood. And yet, Dimity, I won't despair.

Dim. And yet you have reason to despair; a million of reasons—To-morrow is fixed for the wedding-day; sir Charles and his lady are to be here this very night; they are engaged indeed at a great route in town, but they take a bed here, notwithstanding. The family is sitting up for them; Mr Drugget will keep you all up in the next room there, till they arrive; and to-morrow the business is over; and yet you don't despair! hush! hold your tongue; here comes Lovelace. Step in, and I'll advise something, I warrant you. [*Exit* WOODLEY.] The old folks shall not have their own way; 'tis enough to vex a body, to see an old father and mother marrying their daughter as they please, in spite of all I can do. [*Exit.*

Enter DRUGGET *and* LOVELACE.

Drug. And so you like my house and gardens, Mr Lovelace?

Love. Oh! perfectly, sir; they gratify my taste of all things. One sees villas, where nature reigns in a wild kind of simplicity; but then, they have no appearance of art——no art at all.

Drug. Very true, rightly distinguished;—— now, mine is all art; no wild nature here; I did it myself.

Love. What! had you none of the great proficients in gardening to assist you?

Drug. Lack-a-day! no—ha, ha! I understand these things—I love my garden. The front of my house, Mr Lovelace, is not that very pretty?

Love. Elegant to a degree!

Drug. Don't you like the sun-dial, placed just by my dining-room windows?

Love. A perfect beauty!

Drug. I knew you'd like it—and the motto is so well adapted—*Tempus edax & index rerum.* And I know the meaning of it—Time eateth, and discovereth all things—ha, ha! pretty, Mr Lovelace?—I have seen people so stare at it as they pass by—ha, ha!

Love. Why now, I don't believe there's a nobleman in the kingdom has such a thing?

Drug. Oh no—they have got into a false taste. I bought that bit of ground, the other side of the road—and it looks very pretty—I made a duck-pond there, for the sake of the prospect.

Love. Charmingly imagined!

Drug. My leaden images are well—

Love. They exceed ancient statuary.

Drug. I love to be surprised at the turning of a walk with an inanimate figure, that looks you full in the face, and can say nothing to you, while one is enjoying one's own thoughts—ha, ha!—Mr Lovelace, I'll point out a beauty to you—Just by the haw-haw, at the end of my ground, there is a fine Dutch figure, with a scythe in his hand, and a pipe in his mouth—that's a jewel, Mr Lovelace.

Love. That escaped me: a thousand thanks for pointing it out—I observe you have two very fine yew-trees before the house.

Drug. Lack-a-day, sir, they look uncouth—— I have a design about them—I intend—ha, ha! it will be very pretty, Mr Lovelace—I intend to have them cut into the shape of the two giants at Guildhall—ha, ha!

Love. Nobody understands these things like you, Mr Drugget.

Drug. Lack-a-day! it's all my delight now —this is what I have been working for. I have a great improvement to make still—I propose to have my evergreens cut into fortifications; and then I shall have the Moro Castle, and the Havanna; and then near it shall be ships of myrtle, sailing upon seas of box to attack the town: won't that make my place look very rural, Mr Lovelace?

Love. Why you have the most fertile invention, Mr Drugget——

Drug. Ha, ha! this is what I have been working for. I love my garden——but I must beg your pardon for a few moments. I must step and speak with a famous nursery-man, who is come to offer me some choice things.—Do, go and join the company, Mr Lovelace——my daughter Racket and sir Charles will be here presently——I shan't go to bed till I see them ——ha, ha!——my place is prettily variegated —this is what I have been working for—I fined for sheriff to enjoy these things—ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Love. Poor Mr Drugget! Mynheer Van Thundertentrunck, in his little box at the side of a dike, has as much taste and elegance—— However, if I can but carry off his daughter, if I can but rob his garden of that flower——why, I then shall say, 'This is what I have been working for.'

Enter DIMITY.

Dim. Do lend us your assistance, Mr Lovelace—you're a sweet gentleman, and love a good natured action.

Love. Why, how now! what's the matter?

Dim. My master is going to cut the two yew-trees into the shape of two devils, I believe; and my poor mistress is breaking her heart for it.—— Do run and advise him against it—she is your friend, you know she is, sir.

Love. Oh, if that's all——I'll make that matter easy directly.

Dim. My mistress will be for ever obliged to you; and you'll marry her daughter in the morning.

Love. Oh, my rhetoric shall dissuade him.

Dim. And, sir, put him against dealing with that nursery-man; Mrs Drugget hates him.

Love. Does she?

Dim. Mortally.

Love. Say no more, the business is done. [*Exit.*

Dim. If he says one word, old Drugget will never forgive him——My brain was at its last shift; but if this plot takes—So, here comes our Nancy.

Enter NANCY.

Nan. Well, Dimity, what's to become of me?

Dim. My stars! what makes you up, Miss? —I thought you were gone to bed!

Nan. What should I go to bed for? Only to tumble and toss, and fret, and be uneasy—they are going to marry me, and I am frighted out of my wits.

Dim. Why then, you're the only young lady, within fifty miles round, that would be frighted at such a thing.

Nan. Ah! if they would let me chuse for myself.

Dim. Don't you like Mr Lovelace?

Nan. My mamma does, but I don't; I don't mind his being a man of fashion, not I.

Dim. And, pray, can you do better than follow the fashion?

Nan. Ah! I know there's a fashion for new bonnets, and a fashion for dressing the hair—— but I never heard of a fashion for the heart.

Dim. Why then, my dear, the heart mostly follows the fashion now.

Nan. Does it!—pray who sets the fashion of the heart?

Dim. All the fine ladies in London, o' my conscience.

Nan. And what's the last new fashion, pray?

Dim. Why, to marry any fop, that has a few deceitful, agreeable appearances about him; something of a pert phrase, a good operator for the teeth, and tolerable tailor.

Nan. And do they marry without loving?

Dim. Oh! marrying for love has been a great while out of fashion.

Nan. Why, then, I'll wait, till that fashion comes up again.

Dim. And then, Mr Lovelace, I reckon——

Nan. Pshaw! I don't like him: he talks to me as if he was the most miserable man in the world, and the confident thing looks so pleased with himself all the while! I want to marry for love, and not for card-playing—I should not be able to bear the life my sister leads with sir Charles Racket—and I'll forfeit my new cap, if they don't quarrel soon.

Dim. Oh fie! no! they won't quarrel yet a while.—A quarrel in three weeks after marriage would be somewhat of the quickest—By and by we shall hear of their whims and their humours. Well, but if you don't like Mr Lovelace, what say you to Mr Woodley?

Nan. Ah! I don't know what to say——But I can sing something that will explain my mind.

SONG.

When first the dear youth, passing by,
Disclosed his fair form to my sight,
I gazed, but could not tell why;
My heart it went throb with delight.

As nearer he drew, those sweet eyes
Were with their dear meaning so bright,
I trembled, and lost in surprize,
My heart it went throb with delight.

When his lips their dear accents did try
The return of my love to excite,
I feigned, yet began to guess why
My heart it went throb with delight.

We changed the stolen glance, the fond smile,
Which lovers alone read aright;
We looked, and we sighed, yet the while
Our hearts they went throb with delight.

Consent I soon blushed, with a sigh,
My promise I ventured to plight;
Come, Hymen, we then shall know why
Our hearts they go throb with delight.

Enter WOODLEY.

Wood. My sweetest angel! I have heard all, and my heart overflows with love and gratitude.

Nan. Ah! but I did not know you was listening! You should not have betrayed me so, Dimity: I shall be angry with you.

Dim. Well, I'll take my chance for that.——Run both into my room, and say all your pretty things to one another there, for here comes the old gentleman—make haste! away!

[*Exeunt* WOODLEY *and* NANCY.

Enter DRUGGET.

Drug. A forward, presuming coxcomb! Dimity, do you step to Mrs Drugget, and send her hither.

Dim. Yes, sir; it works upon him, I see.

[*Exit.*

Drug. The yew-trees ought not to be cut, because they'll help to keep off the dust, and I am too near the road already—a sorry, ignorant fop! When I am in so fine a situation, and can see every carriage that goes by. And then to abuse the nursery-man's rarities! A finer sucking pig in lavender, with sage growing in his belly, was never seen! And yet he wants me not to have it—But have it I will! There's a fine tree of knowledge, too, with Adam and Eve in juniper; Eve's nose not quite grown, but it is thought in the spring will be very forward—I'll have that, too, with the serpent in ground ivy——two poets in wormwood—I'll have them both.—Ay; and there's a lord mayor's feast in honey suckle; and the whole court of aldermen in hornbeam: and three modern beaux in jessamine, somewhat stunted: they all shall be in my garden, with the Dragon of Wantley in box—all—all—I'll have them all, let my wife and Mr Lovelace say what they will——

Enter MRS DRUGGET.

Mrs Drug. Did you send for me, lovey?

Drug. The yew-trees shall be cut into the giants of Guildhall, whether you will or not.

Mrs Drug. Sure my own dear will do as he pleases.

Drug. And the pond, though you praise the green banks, shall be walled round, and I'll have a little fat boy in marble, spouting up water in the middle.

Mrs Drug. My sweet, who hinders you?

Drug. Yes, and I'll buy the nursery-man's whole catalogue—Do you think, after retiring to live all the way here, almost four miles from London, that I won't do as I please in my own garden?

Mrs Drug. My dear, but why are you in such a passion?

Drug. I'll have the lavender pig, and the Adam and Eve, and the Dragon of Wantley, and all of them; and there shan't be a more romantic spot on the London road than mine.

Mrs Drug. I am sure it's as pretty as hands can make it.

Mrs Drug. I did it all myself, and I'll do more———And Mr Lovelace shan't have my daughter.

Mrs Drug. No! what's the matter now, Mr Drugget?

Drug. He shall learn better manners than to abuse my house and gardens. You put him in the head of it, but I'll disappoint ye both—And so you may go and tell Mr Lovelace, that the match is quite off.

Mrs Drug. I can't comprehend all this, not I; but I'll tell him so, if you please, my dear. I am willing to give myself pain, if it will give you pleasure: must I give myself pain? Don't ask me, pray don't; I don't like pain.

Drug. I am resolved, and it shall be so.

Mrs Drug. Let it be so, then. [*Cries.*] Oh, oh, cruel man! I shall break my heart, if the match is broke off—if it is not concluded tomorrow, send for an undertaker, and bury me the next day.

Drug. How! I don't want that neither.

Mrs Drug. Oh, oh!

Drug. I am your lord and master, my dear, but not your executioner——Before George, it must never be said, that my wife died of too

much compliance——Chear up, my love——and this affair shall be settled as soon as sir Charles and lady Racket arrive.

Miss Drug. You bring me to life again. You know, my sweet, what an happy couple sir Charles and his lady are—Why should not we make our Nancy as happy?

Enter DIMITY.

Dim. Sir Charles and his lady, madam.

Mrs Drug. Oh, charming! I'm transported with joy! Where are they? I long to see them! [*Exit.*

Dim. Well, sir! the happy couple are arrived.

Drug. Yes, they do live happy, indeed!

Dim. But how long will it last?

Drug. How long! Don't forebode any ill, you jade! don't, I say! it will last during their lives, I hope!

Dim. Well, mark the end of it. Sir Charles, I know, is gay and good humoured——but he can't bear the least contradiction, no, not in the merest trifle.

Drug. Hold your tongue—hold your tongue!

Dim. Yes, sir, I have done—and yet there is, in the composition of sir Charles, a certain humour, which, like the flying gout, gives no disturbance to the family, till it settles in the head—When once it fixes there, mercy on every body about him! but here he comes. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir Cha. My dear sir, I kiss your hand—but why stand on ceremony? To find you up thus late, mortifies me beyond expression.

Drug. 'Tis but once in a way, sir Charles.

Sir Cha. My obligations to you are inexpressible; you have given me the most amiable of girls; our tempers accord like unisons in music.

Drug. Ah, that's what makes me happy in my old days! my children and my garden are all my care.

Sir Cha. And my friend Lovelace—he is to have our sister Nancy, I find.

Drug. Why, my life is so minded.

Sir Cha. Oh, by all means, let her be made happy! A very pretty fellow, Lovelace! and, as to that Mr—Woodley, I think you call him—he is but a plain, underbred, ill-fashioned sort of a—nobody knows him; he is not one of us—Oh, by all means, marry her to one of us.

Drug. I believe it must be so—Would you take any refreshment?

Sir Cha. Nothing in nature—it is time to retire.

Drug. Well, well! good night, then, sir Charles——Ha! here comes my daughter——Good night, sir Charles!

Sir Cha. Bon repos.

Drug. [*Going out*] My lady Racket, I'm glad to hear how happy you are; I won't detain you now; there's your good man waiting for you; good night, my girl! [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. I must humour this old putt, in order to be remembered in his will.

Enter LADY RACKET.

Lady Rac. O la! I am quite fatigued; I can hardly move—why don't you help me, you barbarous man?

Sir Cha. There! take my arm——"Was ever thing so pretty made to walk?"

Lady Rac. But I won't be laughed at——I don't love you.

Sir Cha. Don't you?

Lady Rac. No; dear me! this glove! why don't you help me off with my glove? pshaw!—You awkward thing, let it alone! you an't fit to be about me; I might as well not be married, for any use you are of. Reach me a chair; you have no compassion for me—I am so glad to sit down! why do you drag me to routes? You know I hate them?

Sir Cha. Oh, there's no existing, no breathing, unless one does as other people of fashion do.

Lady Rac. But I'm out of humour; I lost all my money.

Sir Cha. How much?

Lady Rac. Three hundred.

Sir Cha. Never fret for that——I don't value three hundred pounds to contribute to your happiness.

Lady Rac. Don't you? not value three hundred pounds to pleasure me?

Sir Cha. You know I don't.

Lady Rac. Ah, you fond fool! But I hate gaming. It almost metamorphoses a woman into a fury! Do you know that I was frighted at myself several times to-night? I had a huge oath at the very tip of my tongue.

Sir Cha. Had ye?

Lady Rac. I caught myself at it; and so I bit my lips; and then I was crammed up in a corner of the room with such a strange party at a whist-table, looking at black and red spots; did you mind them?

Sir Cha. You know I was busy elsewhere.

Lady Rac. There was that strange unaccountable woman, Mrs Nightshade. She behaved so strangely to her husband, a poor, inoffensive, good-natured, good sort of a good-for-nothing man; but she so teazed him—'How could you 'play that card? Ah, you have a head, and so 'has a pin! You are a numscull, you know you 'are—Madam, he has the poorest head in the 'world; he does not know what he is about—'you know you don't——Ah, fye! I am asha-'med of you!'

Sir Cha. She has served to divert you, I see.

Lady Rac. And then, to crown all, there was my lady Clackit, who runs on with an eternal volubility of nothing, out of all season, time, and place. In the very midst of the game, she begins——'Lard, madam, I was apprehensive I 'should not be able to wait on your ladyship—— 'my poor little dog, Pompey——the sweetest 'thing in the world—a spade led!—there's the 'knave—I was fetching a walk, me'm, the other 'morning in the Park—a fine frosty morning it 'was—I love frosty weather of all things—let me 'look at the last trick—and so, me'm, little Pom- 'pey—and if your ladyship was to see the dear 'creature pinched with the frost, and mincing 'his steps along the Mall—with his pretty little 'innocent face——I vow I don't know what to 'play—and so, me'm, while I was talking to 'captain Flimsey—Your ladyship knows captain 'Flimsey?—Nothing but rubbish in my hand—— 'I can't help it——and so, me'm, five odious 'frights of dogs beset my poor little Pompey—— 'the dear creature has the heart of a lion, but 'who can resist five at once? And so Pompey 'barked for assistance——the hurt he received 'was upon his chest—the doctor would not ad- 'vise him to venture out till the wound was healed, 'for fear of an inflammation.——Pray, what's 'trumps?'

Sir Cha. My dear, you would make a most excellent actress!

Lady Rac. Well, now let us go to rest——but, sir Charles, how shockingly you played that last rubber, when I stood looking over you!

Sir Cha. My love, I played the truth of the game.

Lady Rac. No, indeed, my dear, you played it wrong.

Sir Cha. Pho! nonsense! you don't understand it.

Lady Rac. I beg your pardon; I am allowed to play better than you.

Sir Cha. All conceit, my dear; I was perfectly right.

Lady Rac. No such thing, sir Charles; the diamond was the play.

Sir Cha. Pho, pho, ridiculous! the club was the card against the world.

Lady Rac. Oh, no, no, no! I say, it was the diamond!

Sir Cha. Zounds, madam! I say it was the club!

Lady Rac. What do you fly into such a passion for?

Sir Cha. 'Sdeath and fury, do you think I don't know what I am about? I tell you once more, the club was the judgment of it.

Lady Rac. May be so—have it your own way. [*Walks about, and sings.*

Sir Cha. Vexation! you are the strangest woman that ever lived! there's no conversing with you—Look'e here, my lady Racket—it's the clearest case in the world; I'll make it plain in a moment.

Lady Rac. Well, sir! ha, ha, ha! [*With a sneering laugh.*

Sir Cha. I had four cards left—a trump was led—they were six—no, no, no; they were seven, and we nine—then you know—the beauty of the play was to——

Lady Rac. Well, now, it's amazing to me that you can't see it—give me leave, sir Charles—your left hand adversary had led his last trump—and he had before finessed the club, and roughed the diamond—now, if you had put on your diamond—

Sir Cha. Zounds! madam, but we played for the odd trick!

Lady Rac. And sure, the play for the odd trick—

Sir Cha. Death and fury! can't you hear me?

Lady Rac. Go on, sir.

Sir Cha. Zounds! hear me, I say—Will you hear me?

Lady Rac. I never heard the like in my life. [*Hums a tune, and walks about fretfully.*

Sir Cha. Why, then, you are enough to provoke the patience of a Stoick.—[*Looks at her, and she walks about, and laughs uneasy.*] Very well, madam—you know no more of the game than your father's leaden Hercules on the top of the house—You know no more of whist, than he does of gardening.

Lady Rac. Ha, ha, ha! [*Takes out a glass, and settles her hair.*

Sir Cha. You're a vile woman, and I'll not sleep another night under the same roof with you.

Lady Rac. As you please, sir.

Sir Cha. Madam, it shall be as I please—I'll order my chariot this moment—[*Going.*] I know how the cards should be played as well as any man in England, that let me tell you—[*Going.*] And when your family were standing behind counters, measuring out tape, and bartering for Whitechapel needles, my ancestors, madam, my ancestors were squandering away whole estates at cards; whole estates, my lady Racket—[*She hums a tune, and he looks at her.*] Why then, by all that's dear to me, I'll never exchange another word with you, good, bad, or indifferent! ——Look'e, my lady Racket, thus it stood—the trump being led, it was then my business—

Lady Rac. To play the diamond, to be sure.

Sir Cha. Damn it! I have done with you for ever, and so you may tell your father. [*Exit* SIR CHA.

Lady Rac. What a passion the gentleman's in! ha, ha! [*Laughs in a peevish manner.*] I promise him, I'll not give up my judgment.

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir Cha. My lady Racket, look'e, ma'am—once more, out of pure good nature—

Lady Rac. Sir, I am convinced of your good-nature.

Sir Cha. That, and that only, prevails with me to tell you, the club was the play.

Lady Rac. Well, be it so—I have no objection.

Sir Cha. It's the clearest point in the world—we were nine, and—

Lady Rac. And for that very reason—You know the club was the best in the house!

Sir Cha. There is no such thing as talking to you—You're a base woman—I'll part from you for ever; you may live here with your father, and admire his fantastical evergreens, till you grow as fantastica yourself—I'll set out for London this instant—[*Stops at the door.*] The club was not the best in the house.

Lady Rac. How calm you are! Well!—I'll go to bed; will you come?—You had better—come then—you shall come to-bed—not come to bed when I ask you?—Poor sir Charles!

[*Looks and laughs, then exit.*

Sir Cha. That ease is provoking. [*Crosses to the door where she went out.*]—I tell you the diamond was not the play, and here I take my final leave of you—[*Walks back as fast as he can.*]—I am resolved upon it, and I know the club was not the best in the house. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter DIMITY.

Dim. HA, ha, ha! Oh, Heavens! I shall expire in a fit of laughing!—this is the modish couple, that were so happy—such a quarrel as they have had—the whole house is in an uproar!—ha, ha! a rare proof of the happiness they enjoy in high life! I shall never hear people of fashion mentioned again, but I shall be ready to die in a fit of laughter—ho, ho, ho! this is THREE WEEKS AFTER MARRIAGE, I think!

Enter DRUGGET.

Drug. Hey! how! what's the matter, Dimity? What am I called down stairs for?

Dim. Why, there's two people of fashion—

[*Stifles a laugh.*

Drug. Why, you saucy minx!——Explain this moment.

Dim. The fond couple have been together by the ears this half hour—are you satisfied now?

Drug. Ay!—what! have they quarrelled?—what was it about?

Dim. Something above my comprehension, and your's too, I believe—People in high life understand their own forms best—And here comes one, that can unriddle the whole affair. [*Exit* DIM.

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir Chg. [*To the people within.*] I say, let the horses be put to this moment—So, Mr Drugget.

Drug. Sir Charles, here's a terrible bustle—I did not expect this—what can be the matter?

Sir Cha. I have been used by your daughter in so base, so contemptuous a manner, that I am determined not to stay in this house to-night.

Drug. This is a thunder-bolt to me! after seeing how elegantly and fashionably you lived together, to find now all sunshine vanished—Do, sir Charles, let me heal this breach, if possible!

Sir Cha. Sir, 'tis impossible—I'll not live with her a day longer.

Drug. Nay, nay, don't be over hasty, let me intreat you—go to bed, and sleep upon it—in the morning, when you're cool—

Sir Cha. Oh, sir, I am very cool, I assure you, ha, ha!—it is not in her power, sir, to—a—a—to disturb the serenity of my temper—Don't imagine that I'm in a passion—I'm not so easily ruffled as you may imagine—But, quietly and deliberately, I can repay the injuries done me by a false, ungrateful, deceitful wife.

Drug. The injuries done you by a false, ungrateful wife! not my daughter, I hope—

Sir Cha. Her character is now fully known to me—she's a vile woman! that's all I have to say, sir.

Drug. Hey, how!—a vile woman—what has she done?—I hope she is not capable—

Sir Cha. I shall enter into no detail, Mr Drugget; the time and circumstances won't allow it at present—But depend upon it, I have done with her—a low, unpolished, uneducated, false, imposing—See if the horses are put-to!

Drug. Mercy on me! in my old days to hear this!

Enter MRS DRUGGET.

Mrs Drug. Deliver me! I am all over in such a tremble—sir Charles, I shall break my heart, if there's any thing amiss!

Sir Cha. Madam, I am very sorry, for your sake; but there is no possibility of living with her.

Mrs Drug. My poor, dear girl! What can she have done!

Sir Cha. What all her sex can do! the very spirit of them all.

Drug. Ay, ay, ay! she's bringing foul disgrace upon us—This comes of her marrying a man of fashion!

Sir Cha. Fashion, sir!—that should have instructed her better—she might have been sensible of her happiness—Whatever you may think

of the fortune you gave her, my rank commands respect—claims obedience, attention, truth, and love, from one raised in the world, as she has been, by an alliance with me.

Drug. And let me tell you, however you may estimate your quality, my daughter is dear to me.

Sir Cha. And, sir, my character is dear to me!

Drug. Yet, you must give me leave to tell you—

Sir Cha. I won't hear a word!

Drug. Not in behalf of my own daughter?

Sir Cha. Nothing can excuse her—'tis to no purpose—she has married above her; and if that circumstance makes the lady forget herself, she shall at least see, that I can and will support my own dignity.

Drug. But, sir, I have a right to ask—

Mrs Drug. Patience, my dear; be a little calm.

Drug. Mrs Drugget, do you have patience; I must and will enquire.

Mrs Drug. Don't be so hasty, my love; have some respect for sir Charles's rank; don't be violent with a man of his fashion.

Drug. Hold your tongue, woman, I say!—your'e not a person of fashion, at least—My daughter was ever a good girl.

Sir Cha. I have found her out.

Drug. Oh! then it is all over—and it does not signify arguing about it.

Mrs Drug. That ever I should live to see this hour! how the unfortunate girl could take such wickedness in her head, I can't imagine—I'll go and speak to the unhappy creature this moment.

[*Exit* MRS DUR.

Sir Cha. She stands detected now—detected in her truest colours!

Drug. Well, grievous as it may be, let me hear the circumstances of this unhappy business.

Sir Cha. Mr Drugget, I have not leisure now; but her behaviour has been so exasperating, that I shall make the best of my way to town—My mind is fixed—She sees me no more; and so, your servant, sir. [*Exit* SIR CHA.

Drug. What a calamity has here befallen us! a good girl, and so well disposed, till the evil communication of high life, and fashionable vices, turned her to folly!

Enter LOVELACE.

Love. Joy, joy! Mr Drugget, I give you joy!

Drug. Don't insult me, sir! I desire you won't.

Love. Insult you, sir! is there any thing insulting, my dear sir, if I take the liberty to congratulate you on—

Drug. There! there!—the manners of high life for you!—he thinks there's nothing in all this—the ill behaviour of a wife he thinks an ornament to her character—Mr Lovelace, you shall have no daughter of mine.

Love. My dear sir, never bear malice—I have reconsidered the thing; and curse catch me, if I don't think your notion of the Guildhall giants, and the court of aldermen in hornbeam—

Drug. Well, well, well! there may be people at the court end of the town in hornbeam, too.

Love. Yes, faith, so there may—and I believe I could recommend you to a tolerable collection—however, with your daughter I am ready to venture—

Drug. But I am not ready—I'll not venture my girl with you—no more daughters of mine shall have their minds depraved by polite vices.

Enter WOODLEY.

Mr Woodley—you shall have Nancy to your wife, as I promised you—take her to-morrow morning.

Wood. Sir, I have not words to express—

Love. What the devil is the matter with the old haberdasher now?

Drug. And hark ye, Mr Woodley?—I'll make you a present for your garden, of a coronation dinner in greens, with the champion riding on horseback, and the sword will be full grown before April next.

Wood. I shall receive it, sir, as your favour.

Drug. Ay, ay! I see my error in wanting an alliance with great folks—I had rather have you, Mr Woodley, for my son-in-law, than any courtly fop of them all. Is this man gone?—Is sir Charles gone?

Wood. Not yet—he makes a bawling yonder for his horses—I'll step and call him to you.

[*Exit* WOOD.

Drug. I am out of all patience—I am out of my senses—I must see him once more—Mr Lovelace, neither you nor any person of fashion shall ruin another daughter of mine.

[*Exit* DRUG.

Love. Droll this!—damned droll; and every syllable of it Arabic to me—the queer old putt is as whimsical in his notions of life as of gardening. If this be the case—I'll brush, and leave him to his exotics. [*Exit* LOVE.

Enter LADY RACKET, MRS DRUGGET, *and* DIMITY.

Lady Rac. A cruel, barbarous man! to quarrel in this unaccountable manner; to alarm the whole house, and expose me and himself, too!

Mrs Drug. Oh! child, I never thought it would have come to this—your shame wont end here! it will be all over St James's parish before to-morrow morning!

Lady Rac. Well, if it must be so, there's one comfort, the story will tell more to his disgrace than mine.

Dim. As I'm a sinner, and so it will, madam. He deserves what he has met with, I think.

Mrs Drug. Dimity, don't you encourage her—you shock me to hear you speak so—I did not think you had been so hardened.

Lady Rac. Hardened, do you call it?—I have lived in the world to very little purpose, if such trifles as these are to disturb my rest.

Mrs Drug. You wicked girl!—Do you call it a trifle, to be guilty of falsehood to your husband's bed?

Lady Rac. How!

[*Turns short, and stares at her.*

Dim. That! that's a mere trifle, indeed!—I have been in as good places as any body, and not a creature minds it now, I'm sure.

Mrs Drug. My lady Racket, my lady Racket, I never could think to see you come to this deplorable shame!

Lady Rac. Surely the base man has not been capable of laying any thing of that sort to my charge. [*Aside.*] All this is unaccountable to me—ha, ha!—'tis ridiculous beyond measure!

Dim. That's right, madam—laugh at it—you served him right.

Mrs Drug. Charlotte! Charlotte! I'm astonished at your wickedness!

Lady Rac. Well, I protest and vow I don't comprehend all this. Has sir Charles accused me of any impropriety in my conduct?

Mrs Drug. Oh! too true, he has—he has found you out; and you have behaved basely, he says.

Lady Rac. Madam!

Mrs Drug. You have fallen into frailty, like many others of your sex, he says; and he is resolved to come to a separation directly.

Lady Rac. Why, then, if he is so base a wretch as to dishonour me in that manner, his heart shall ache before I live with him again.

Dim. Hold to that, madam, and let his head ache into the bargain.

Mrs Drug. Your poor father heard it as well as me.

Lady Rac. Then let your doors be opened for him this very moment—let him return to London—if he does not, I'll lock myself up, and the false one shan't approach me, though he beg on his knees at my very door—a base, injurious man!

[*Exit.*

Mrs Drug. Dimity, do let us follow, and hear what she has to say for herself. [*Exit.*

Dim. She has excuse enough, I warrant her. What a noise is here, indeed! I have lived in polite families, where there was no such bustle made about nothing. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* DRUGGET.

Sir Cha. 'Tis in vain, sir; my resolution is taken.

Drug. Well; but, consider I am her father—indulge me only, till we hear what the girl has to say in her defence.

Sir Cha. She can have nothing to say—no excuse can palliate such behaviour.

Drug. Don't be too positive: there may be some mistake.

Sir Cha. No mistake—did I not see her, hear her myself?

Drug. Lackaday! then I am an unfortunate man!

Sir Cha. She will be unfortunate, too—with all my heart—she may thank herself—she might have been happy, had she been so disposed.

Drug. Why, truly, I think she might.

Enter MRS DRUGGET.

Mrs Drug. I wish you'd moderate your anger a little, and let us talk over this affair with temper——my daughter denies every tittle of your charge.

Sir Cha. Denies it! denies it!

Mrs Drug. She does, indeed.

Sir Cha. And that aggravates her fault.

Mrs Drug. She vows you never found her out in any thing that was wrong.

Sir Cha. So! she does not allow it to be wrong, then?—Madam, I tell you again, I know her thoroughly; I say, I have found her out; and I am now acquainted with her character.

Mrs Drug. Then you are in opposite stories—she swears, my dear Mr Drugget, the poor girl swears she never was guilty of the smallest infidelity to her husband in her born days.

Sir Char. And what then?—what if she does say so?

Mrs Drug. And if she says truly, it is hard her character should be blown upon without just cause.

Sir Char. And is she, therefore, to behave ill in other respects? I never charged her with infidelity to me, madam—there, I allow her innocent.

Drug. And did you not charge her, then?

Sir Char. No, sir; I never dreamt of such a thing.

Drug. Why, then, if she's innocent, let me tell you, you're a scandalous person.

Mrs Drug. Prithee, my dear——

Drug. Be quiet. Though he is a man of quality, I will tell him of it—did I not fine for sheriff? Yes, you are a scandalous person to defame an honest man's daughter.

Sir Char. What have you taken into your head now?

Drug. You charged her with falsehood to your bed.

Sir Char. No—never—never.

Drug. But I say you did—you called yourself a cuckold—Did not he, wife?

Mrs Drug. Yes, lovey; I'm witness.

Sir Cha. Absurd! I said no such thing.

Drug. But I aver you did.

Mrs Drug. You did indeed, sir.

Sir Cha. But I tell you no—positively, no.

Drug. and Mrs Drug. And I say yes—positively, yes.

Sir Cha. 'Sdeath! this is all madness!

Drug. You said, she followed the ways of most of her sex.

Sir Cha. I said so—and what then?

Drug. There! he owns it—owns that he called himself a cuckold—and without rhyme or reason into the bargain!

Sir Cha. I never owned any such thing.

Drug. You owned it even now—now—now—now!

Enter DIMITY *in a fit of laughing.*

Dim. What do you think it was all about?—ha, ha! The whole secret is come out—ha, ha! It was all about a game of cards—ha, ha!

Drug. A game of cards!

Dim. [*Laughing.*] It was all about a club and a diamond. [*Runs out laughing.*

Drug. And was that all, sir Charles?

Sir Cha. And enough, too, sir.

Drug. And was that what you found her out in?

Sir Cha. I can't bear to be contradicted, when I'm clear that I'm in the right.

Drug. I never heard such a heap of nonsense in all my life!—Woodley shall marry Nancy.

Mrs Drug. Don't be in a hurry, my love; this will all be made up.

Drug. Why does he not go and beg her pardon, then?

Sir Cha. I beg her pardon! I won't debase myself to any of you—I shan't forgive her, you may rest assured. [*Exit.*

Drug. Now, there—there's a pretty fellow for you!

Mrs Drug. I'll step, and prevail on my lady Racket to speak to him—then all will be well. [*Exit.*

Drug. A ridiculous fop! I'm glad it's no worse, however.

Enter NANCY.

So, Nancy, you seem in confusion, my girl?

Nan. How can one help it, with all this noise in the house? and you're going to marry me as all as my sister. I hate Mr Lovelace.

Drug. Why so, my child?

Nan. I know these people of quality despise us all, out of pride, and would be glad to marry us out of avarice.

Drug. The girl's right.

Nan. They marry one woman, live with another, and love only themselves.

Drug. And then quarrel about a card!

Nan. I don't want to be a gay lady; I want to be happy.

Drug. And so you shall—don't fright yourself, child; step to your sister; bid her make herself easy—go, and comfort her, go.

Nan. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Drug. I'll step, and settle the matter with Mr Woodley this moment. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR CHARLES, *with a pack of cards in his hand.*

Sir Cha. Never was any thing like her behaviour—I can pick out the very cards I had in my hand, and then 'tis as plain as the sun—there, now—there—no—damn it—no—there it was—now, let's see—they had four by honours—and we played for the odd trick—damnation!—honours were divided—ay!—honours were divided—and then a trump was led—and the other side had the—Confusion!—this preposterous woman has put it all out of my head. [*Puts the cards into his pocket.*] Mighty well, madam; I have done with you.

Enter MRS DRUGGET.

Mrs Drug. Come, sir Charles, let me prevail—Come with me, and speak to her.

Sir Cha. I don't desire to see her face.

Mrs Drug. If you were to see her all bathed in tears, I am sure it would melt your very heart.

Sir Cha. Madam, it shall be my fault, if ever I am treated so again—I'll have nothing to say to her. [*Going, stops.*] Does she give up the point?

Mrs Drug. She does; she agrees to any thing.

Sir Cha. Does she allow, that the club was the play?

Mrs Drug. Just as you please; she's all submission.

Sir Cha. Does she own, that the club was not the best in the house?

Mrs Drug. She does—she does.

Sir Cha. Then I'll step and speak to her—I never was clearer in any thing in my life. [*Exit.*

Mrs Drug. Lord love them! they'll make it up now; and then they'll be as happy as ever. [*Exit.*

Enter NANCY.

Nan. Well! they may talk what they will of taste and genteel life—I don't think its natural. Give me Mr Woodley—La! there's that odious thing coming this way!

Enter LOVELACE.

Love. My charming little innocent, I have not seen you these three hours.

Nan. I have been very happy these three hours.

Love. My sweet angel! you seem disconcerted—and you neglect your pretty figure! No matter for the present; in a little time I shall make you appear as graceful and genteel as your sister.

Nan. That is not what employs my thoughts, sir.

Love. Ay; but, my pretty little dear, that should engage your attention—to set off and adorn the charms that nature has given you, should be the business of your life.

Nan. Ah! but I have learnt a new song, that contradicts what you say; and, though I am not in a very good humour for singing, yet you shall hear it.

Love. By all means—don't check your fancy—I am all attention.

Nan. It expresses my sentiments; and, when you have heard them, you won't teaze me any more.

SONG.

To dance, and to dress, and to flaunt it about,
To run to park, play, to assembly and rout,
To wander for ever in whim's giddy maze,
And one poor hair torture a million of ways!
To put, at the glass, every feature to school,
And practise their art on each fop and each fool,
Of one thing to think, and another to tell—
These, these are the manners of each giddy belle!

To smile, and to simper, white teeth to display;
The time, in gay follies, to trifle away;
Against every virtue the bosom to steel,
And only of dress the anxieties feel;
To be at Eve's ear the insidious decoy,
The pleasure ne'er taste, yet the mischief enjoy;
To boast of soft raptures they never can know—
These, these are the manners of each giddy beau!

[*Exit.*

Love. I must have her, notwithstanding this; for though I'm not in love, yet I'm in debt.

Enter DRUGGET.

Drug. So! Mr Lovelace. Any news from above stairs? Is this absurd quarrel at an end? Have they made it up?

Love. Oh! a mere bagatelle, sir—these little fracas among the better sort of people never last long—elegant trifles cause elegant disputes, and we come together elegantly again, as you see; for here they come, in perfect good humour.

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* LADY RACKET.

Sir Cha. Mr Drugget, I embrace you; sir, you see me now in the most perfect harmony of spirits.

Drug. What, all reconciled again?

Lady Rac. All made up, sir; I knew how to bring him to my lure. This is the first difference, I think, we ever had, sir Charles?

Sir Cha. And I'll be sworn it shall be the last.

Drug. I am happy at last! sir Charles, I can spare you an image to put on the top of your house in London.

Sir Cha. Infinitely obliged to you!

Drug. Well, well! Its time to retire now; I am glad to see you reconciled; and now, I'll wish you a good night, sir Charles—Mr Lovelace, this is your way. Fare ye well both; I am glad your quarrels are at an end. This way, Mr Lovelace.

[*Exeunt* LOVELACE *and* DRUGGET.

Lady Rac. Ah! you're a sad man, sir Charles, to behave to me as you have done!

Sir Cha. My dear, I grant it; and such an absurd quarrel, too—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. Yes—ha, ha! about such a trifle!

Sir Cha. Its pleasant how we could both fall into such an error—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. Ridiculous beyond expression!—ha, ha!

Sir Cha. And then the mistake your father and mother fell into—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. That, too, is a diverting part of the story—ha, ha! But, sir Charles, must I stay and live with my father till I grow as fantastical as his own ever-greens?

Sir Cha. No, no; prithee don't remind me of my folly.

Lady Rac. Ah! my relations were all standing behind counters selling Whitechapel needles, while your family were spending great estates!

Sir Cha. Nay, nay, spare my blushes.

Lady Rac. How could you say so harsh a thing? I don't love you!

Sir Cha. It was indelicate, I grant it.

Lady Rac. Am I a vile woman?

Sir Cha. How can you, my angel?

Lady Rac. I shan't forgive you!—I'll have you on your knees for this! [*Sings and plays with him.*] 'Go, naughty man.' Ah! sir Charles.

Sir Cha. The rest of my life shall aim at convincing you how sincerely I love——

Lady Rac. [*Sings.*] 'Go, naughty man, I can't abide you.' Well! come let us go to rest, [*Going.*] Ah! sir Charles—now it is all over, the diamond was the play.

Sir Cha. Oh! no, no, no, my dear—ha, ha, ha!—it was the club indeed.

Lady Rac. Indeed, my love, you're mistaken.

Sir Cha. No! no, no, no!

Lady Rac. But I say, yes, yes, yes!

[*Both laughing.*

Sir Cha. Pshaw! no such thing—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. 'Tis so, indeed—ha, ha!

Sir Cha. No, no, no—you'll make me die with laughing.

Lady Rac. Ay, and you make me laugh too—ha, ha!

[*Toying with him.*

Enter FOOTMAN.

Foot. Your honour's cap and slippers.

Sir Cha. Ay, lay down my night-cap; and here, take these shoes off. [*He takes them off, and leaves them at a distance.*] Indeed my lady Racket, you make me ready to expire with laughing—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. You may laugh; but I'm right notwithstanding.

Sir Cha. How can you say so?

Lady Rac. How can you say otherwise?

Sir Cha. Well, now mind me, my lady Racket; we can now talk of this matter in good humour. We can discuss it coolly——

Lady Rac. So we can, and its for that reason I venture to speak to you; are these the ruffles I bought for you?

Sir Cha. They are, my dear.

Lady Rac. They are very pretty; but indeed you played the card wrong.

Sir Cha. Pho, there is nothing so clear---if you will but hear me---only hear me.

Lady Rac. Ah! but do you hear me---the thing was thus---the adversary's club being the best in the house——

Sir Cha. How can you talk so!——

[*Somewhat peevish.*

Lady Rac. See there now——

Sir Cha. Listen to me; this was the affair——

Lady Rac. Pshaw! fiddlestick! hear me first.

Sir Cha. Pho! no, damn it, let me speak.

Lady Rac. Well, to be sure, you're a strange man.

Sir Cha. Plague and torture! there is no such thing as conversing with you.

Lady Rac. Very well, sir! fly out again.

Sir Cha. Look here now; here's a pack of cards---now you shall be convinced——

Lady Rac. You may talk till to-morrow; I know I'm right.

[*Walks about.*

Sir Cha. Why, then, by all that's perverse, you are the most headstrong---Can't you look here now---here are the very cards.

Lady Rac. Go on; you'll find it out at last.

Sir Cha. Damn it! will you let a man shew you? Pho! its all nonsense! I'll talk no more about it. [*Puts up the cards.*] Come, we'll go to bed. [*Going.*] Now only stay a moment. [*Takes out the cards.*] Now, mind me, see here——

Lady Rac. No, it does not signify; your head will be clearer in the morning---I'll go to bed.

Sir Cha. Stay a moment, can't ye.

Lady Rac. No---my head begins to ache——

[*Affectedly.*

Sir Cha. Why, then, damn the cards!---there, there! [*Throwing the cards about.*] And there, and there---You may go to bed by yourself; and confusion seize me if I live a moment longer with you!

[*Putting on his shoes again.*

Enter DIMITY.

Dim. Do you call, sir?

Sir Cha. No, never, madam.

Dim. [*In a fit of laughing.*] What, at it again!

Lady Rac. Take your own way, sir.

Sir Cha. Now, then, I tell you once more, you are a vile woman!

Dim. La, sir!—This is charming—I'll run and tell the old couple. [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. [*Still putting on his shoes.*] You are the most perverse, obstinate, nonsensical—

Lady Rac. Ha, ha! don't make me laugh again, sir Charles.

Sir Cha. Hell and the devil!—Will you sit down quietly, and let me convince you?

Lady Rac. I don't chuse to hear any more about it.

Sir Cha. Why then I believe you are possessed—it is in vain to talk sense and reason to you.

Lady Rac. Thank you for your compliment, sir—such a man [*With a sneering laugh.*] I never knew the like—[*Sits down.*]

Sir Cha. I promise you, you shall repent of this usage, before you have a moment of my company again—it shan't be in a hurry, you may depend, madam—Now, see here—I can prove it to a demonstration [*Sits down by her, she gets up.*] Look ye there again, now—you have the most perverse and peevish temper—I wish I had never seen your face—I wish I was a thousand miles from you—sit down but one moment.

Lady Rac. I'm disposed to walk about, sir.

Sir Cha. Why then, may I perish, if ever—a blockhead—an idiot I was to marry [*Walks about.*] such a provoking---impertinent—[*She sits down.*] Damnation!---I am so clear in the thing---she is not worth my notice—[*Sits down, turns his back, and looks uneasy.*] I'll take no more pains about it.—[*Pauses for some time, then looks at her.*] Is it not very strange, that you won't hear me?

Lady Rac. Sir, I am very ready to hear you.

Sir Cha. Very well then---very well---my dear ---you remember how the game stood?

Lady Rac. I wish you'd untie my necklace; it hurts me.

Sir Cha. Why can't you listen?

Lady Rac. I tell you it hurts me terribly.

Sir Cha. Death and confusion! there is no bearing this——you may be as wrong as you please; and may I never hold four by honours, if I ever endeavour to set you right again.

[*Exit.*

Enter MR *and* MRS DRUGGET, WOODLEY, LOVELACE, *and* NANCY.

Drug. What's here to do now?

Lady Rac. Never was such a man born——I did not say a word to the gentleman——and yet

he has been raving about the room like a madman.

Drug. And about a club again, I suppose?—Come hither, Nancy; Mr Woodley, she is your's for life.

Mrs Drug. My dear, how can you be so—

Drug. It shall be so—take her for life, Mr Woodley.

Wood. My whole life shall be devoted to her happiness.

Love. The devil! and so I am to be left in the lurch in this manner, am I?

Lady Rac. Oh! this is only one of those polite disputes which people of quality, who have nothing else to differ about, must always be liable to—This will all be made up.

Drug. Never tell me—it's too late now—Mr Woodley, I recommend my girl to your care—I shall have nothing now to think of, but my greens, and my images, and my shrubbery——though, mercy on all married folks, say I! for these wranglings are, I am afraid, what we must all come to.

LADY RACKET, *coming forward.*

What we must all come to? What?—Come to what?
Must broils and quarrels be the marriage lot?
If that's the wise, deep meaning of our poet,
The man's a fool! a blockhead! and I'll shew it.

What could induce him in an age so nice,
So famed for virtue, so refined from vice,
To form a plan so trivial, false and low?
As if a belle could quarrel with a beau:
As if there were—in these thrice happy days,
One who from nature, or from reason strays!
There's no cross husband now; no wrangling wife—
The man is downright ignorant of life.
'Tis the millennium this—devoid of guile,
Fair gentle Truth, and white robed Candour, smile.
From every breast the sordid love of gold
Is banished quite—no boroughs now are sold!
Pray tell me, sirs,—(for I don't know I vow,)
Pray—is there such a thing as gaming now?
Do peers make laws against the giant vice?
And then at Arthur's break them in a trice?
No—no—our lives are virtuous all, austere and hard;
Pray, ladies—do you ever see a card?
Those empty boxes shew you don't love plays;
The managers, poor souls! get nothing now-a-days.
If here you come—by chance, but once a week,
The pit can witness that you never speak:
Pensive Attention sits with decent mien;
No paint, no naked shoulders, to be seen!

And yet this grave, this moral, pious age,
May learn one useful lesson from the stage.
Shun strife, ye fair, and once a contest o'er,
Wake to a blaze the dying flame no more—
From fierce debate fly all the tender loves;
And Venus, cries, 'Coachman, put to my doves.'
The genial bed no blooming Grace prepares,
'And every day becomes a day of cares.'

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE END.